

Commentary

VOLUME EIGHTY-FIVE • NUMBER FOUR • APRIL 1988

The Return of Eugenics

Richard John Neuhaus

Can Israel Withdraw?

Yes: Mitchell Bard

No: David Bar-Illan

Arms Control & Its Casualties

Mary Tedeschi Eberstadt

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Varieties of Yiddish Verse—In English

Maurice Friedberg

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Commentary

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Letters from Readers

The Bible & Its Readers

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In "Responding to the Bible" [January], . . . Fernanda Eberstadt has a very special bone to pick with contemporary maulers of Scripture. She notes the fact that the "historical-critical" approach to the study of the Bible . . . has generated contradictions between biblical scholars and the devout. "On the whole, they have been working at cross purposes," she says. Miss Eberstadt is particularly exercised by *Congregation: Contemporary Writers Read the Jewish Bible*, edited by David Rosenberg, a new product of the historical-critical approach that only exacerbates these cross purposes. . . . She notes sadly: "With the exception of a half-dozen insightful chapters, . . . this collection would seem to bear a sad message—that the Bible no longer speaks to 'contemporary writers,' at least if they are secular American Jews, that they do not know its stories and evidently cannot bear to hear its melodies."

Unfortunately, this . . . is a universal phenomenon among contemporary intellectuals—a fact that soon rubs off on impressionable college students when they enter the closed-minded environment of the contemporary campus. Miss Eberstadt is right when she observes that the "loss of the Bible as an essential part of the Western artist's genetic code applies widely to writers today [and] may help . . . to account for the frailty [good word—ALW] of our literary culture."

But as she probes into a second anthology, *The Literary Guide to the Bible*, edited by Robert Alter and Frank Kermode, some may raise objections to the drift of her analysis. After aptly observing that the Bible is an ideal "quarry" . . . for literary criticism, Miss Eberstadt makes the same labored distinction . . . between the "Old" and "New" Testaments for which she excoriates certain Bible readers and critics, those with ". . . conventional preconceptions about the difference between the Christian and the 'Old Testament' ethic." . . . For the kinship between the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament is as close as the fingers of one's hand or the hairs on one's head. Yet Miss Eberstadt, it seems to me, allows herself

to fall into the same trap as the critics whom she chastises.

For instance, she contrasts the "abiding command of the Jewish God [to] 'be fruitful and multiply'" with Jesus's prescriptions, in Miss Eberstadt's words, to "leave your mother and father and children . . . hate the world, [and] worship God not in a likeminded community but secretly in your closet."

Not only is this alleged contrast . . . unconvincing on its own merits, it ill serves the integrity of both Judaism and Christianity, and their close kinship with each other. . . .

The much misquoted and misinterpreted injunction of Jesus—to "set man at variance against his father, and daughter against her mother . . ." (Matthew 10:34) or a similar passage in Luke (12:53)—was not intended to cancel other Scriptural injunctions related to family cohesion, as, for example, to "cleave" to one's wife (Matthew 19:5; see also Genesis 2:24), to "honor thy father and thy mother" (Mark 7:10), and similar maxims in Proverbs and other books of the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament. These words of Jesus simply recognized the facts of the time: that households were divided by their contrasting religious or pagan loyalties under the same roof; that as far as Jesus was concerned, his followers must make a firm commitment to his teachings if they wished to be disciples—a pledge of loyalty transcending the "many mansions" in one's father's house. Such language stemmed from the actual discord common in families at the time of the spread of Christianity.

Second, Miss Eberstadt's reading of the New Testament to mean that Jesus, Paul, or any of the disciples taught their flock to "hate the world" betrays, in my opinion, a lamentable misunderstanding of Scripture, both Jewish and Christian. No less than the Hebrew Bible, the message of the New Testament is clearly life-affirming, life-sustaining, and by no means life-denying. . . .

As the late Lewis Mumford . . . once observed: "Every word and act of Jesus can be interpreted as an attempt to *disinter* the corpse of man: to 'raise the dead.' . . . Nothing was good for Jesus unless it furthered life in its perpetual process of self-transcendence and

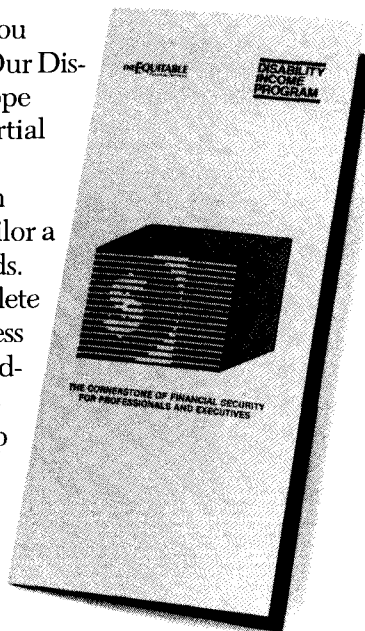
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self-liberation." Or, as Emerson put it: "Life only avails, not the having lived. So the Child, with its multiple potentialities for growth, is the true symbol of this doctrine. . . . Death in all its forms—vice, disease, ignorance, paralysis—was used as a condition for a fuller and richer life."

Yes, the vision of Jesus was one of health, life, renewal *in this world*, not hatred of or detachment from this world. To wit: "The kingdom has come" (Mark 1:5); "the kingdom of God is within you" (Luke 17:21); "the field is the world" (Matthew 13:38), etc.

Third, Miss Eberstadt's criticism of Christianity for its alleged closet worship of God seems at best more a criticism of a certain species of fringe Protestantism or "Judeo-Christian humanism" of the Christian or Jewish existentialist sort than it is of any thrust or sense that could be located in Scripture itself.

Indeed, Jesus's emphasis is upon a community of worshippers, not self-righteous and/or eccentric ostriches. His appeal is constantly to group effort, communal spirit, and worship of God together. Needless to say, in most cases establishment church worship by Catholics and Protestants down through the centuries exhibits the strongest possible adherence to the idea of group worship . . .

Anyone with even the most casual acquaintance with Scripture . . . would surely know that Jesus was no advocate, nor were his followers, of a church . . . consisting of one individual or of isolated individual worshippers. . . .

ALBERT L. WEEKS
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

When Fernanda Eberstadt writes that the "reader of the King James Version turns the page from Malachi to Matthew without any sensation of a leap into the new or the unknown," implying that such a leap takes place, or when she writes that "the gospel revealed in the life of Jesus is a gospel of individualism and inwardness . . ." where you should ". . . worship God not in a likeminded community but secretly in your closet," she gives us a minority view of the meaning of the New Testament.

A Protestant view, to be precise. Protestants remain the protesters, the holders of the minority viewpoint among Christians. According to the *Britannica Book of the Year*,

1986, out of an estimated worldwide Christian population of 1,061 million, there are 628 million Catholics, 373 million Protestants, and 58 million Orthodox—that means that all the Protestant sects put together constitute 35 percent of the world's Christians. Even in the United States, where in 1986 57 percent of the population told the Gallup poll that they were Protestant and 28 percent said they were Catholic, the idea that Christ practiced a kind of "lone wolf" spirituality is not that common. . . .

Consider Miss Eberstadt's leap from Malachi to Matthew: this leaves out the Apocrypha, that collection of books that were not included in the Hebrew Scriptures yet are considered part of the Christian "Old Testament." Protestants doubt their authenticity, and so they stopped including them in their Bibles in the early 19th century. (When the American Bible Society was founded in 1816, it printed the King James Version complete with the Apocrypha, but dropped the practice twelve years later.) If there is a chasm between Malachi and Matthew, it is bridged by the Apocrypha. The New Testament endorsement of chastity, for instance, does not seem that radical after you have read Wisdom of Solomon 3:13-4:6.

The Jesus of the Gospels does spend time in contemplative prayer, but he also worships God as part of the Israelite community. ("He came to Nazareth, where he had grown up, and went according to his custom into the synagogue on the sabbath day. He stood up to read and was handed a scroll of the prophet Isaiah," Luke 4:16f). He founds a Church and invests its leader with the authority to teach in his name (cf. Matthew 16:13-19). After his death, this Church continues to worship together "every day . . . meeting together in the temple area and . . . breaking bread in their homes" (Acts 2:46). . . .

If the Gospel is individualistic, it is also a matter of community: of devotion to "the teaching of the apostles and to the communal life, to the breaking of the bread and to the prayers" (Acts 2:42).

DON SCHENK
Allentown, Pennsylvania

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Fernanda Eberstadt, in her fine article, "Responding to the Bible," quotes the critic Harold Bloom on the sacrifice of Isaac and justly

takes him to task. The question of an Abraham who can plead with God for cities having nothing to do with him, while protesting not a word to God for the life of Isaac, his son, who is everything he loves and the link to God's promise for his future, needs to be examined from several angles, none of them having to do with "J" sources.

What may seem totally contradictory in Abraham's character is actually not so. As Miss Eberstadt points out, "like all biblical heroes he is also self-denying in the crunch." In the situation of Sodom and Gomorrah . . . he pleads passionately not only for the cities' inhabitants, but for God's reputation: "Shall not the Lord of all the earth do justly?" as if to say, "What will people think of You, God, if You do this?" This is not an average response but one of cosmic social, moral, and religious concerns. This same profound mixture of concerns, brought to an exalted climax, animates the *Akedah*, Abraham's willingness to sacrifice Isaac, his unquestioning obedience to God's direct command when it concerns the most important fact of his own existence. . . .

Two other elements, language and history, should be considered in order to understand why the recitation of this story is so central to Jewish worship. First, the language pattern. The few short narrative passages of the *Akedah* are the most intimate and tender in all Scripture. The reader is privy to an almost whispered dialogue among Abraham, his son Isaac, and God as the three walk together. The same language pattern is used by God when He calls Abraham at the beginning of the story. . . . This particular pattern is found nowhere else in the Bible; . . . not even to Moses does God speak in such a soft, gently-falling-rain kind of word pattern. And then, suddenly, when Abraham has finished, the tone changes abruptly. Not God now, but His angel appears, and speaks in formal, public, and majestic tones. . . .

Historically, human sacrifice *was* public and formal, not the private act of an Abraham who leaves even his servants behind. After all, how does one distinguish . . . sacrifice from plain murder if not by great public display? Secondly, unlike in the *Akedah* story, there was never a question of intimacy between the sacrifice and the sacrificer (see, for example, the story of Jethro, who

hardens himself to his daughter before slaying her). A third distinguishing historical element is that the *Akedah* contains no promise of a reward, or release. Ancient people normally did not perform their human sacrifices without hope of specific preordained rewards.

Abraham's silent obedience, his intimacy with the son he is about to slay . . . and with the God for Whom his son is to be sacrificed; the tender and intimate nature of the dialogue among God, father, and son, who speak to one another as equals in rank; the clean historical break with the pagan understanding of human sacrifice; then the majestic proclamation, the public affirmation of God's pleasure and Abraham's reward, mentioned only at the end of the episode; and, not least, the fact that Isaac is spared—all these elements add up to a profound concept of the deity, of the order of the universe, and to a most exalted state of human possibility.

MAURICE SCHMIDT

Texas A&I University
Kingsville, Texas

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Fernanda Eberstadt's article, "Responding to the Bible," brings to mind an area in which some useful dialogue could go on between devout Christians and Jews. Howard Singer's article and the resulting onslaught of letters ["The Rise and Fall of Interfaith Dialogue," May 1987; Letters from Readers, September 1987] pointed out once again the futility (and indeed the undesirability) of attempts at theological reconciliation. Ordinary orthodox Christians like me have always known that there exists no common ground for such reconciliation short of conversion or the gutting of our respective bodies of faith. I would presume that our "hardline conservative" counterparts in the Jewish community share this opinion. Quite logically, we therefore do not bother with the tedious process.

But while disparaging theological dialogue, conservative Christians are acutely aware of our debts to the Hebrew Scriptures and know that we cannot understand the Christian faith without understanding them and whence they came. We love the Hebrew Bible, as inspired and revealed truth from God; herein lies our common ground with devout Jews. We love the beauty of the poetry, the wis-

dom of the laws, and the eternal truths in the stories of living, breathing, and very real human beings. We love it as history, we love it as literature, we love it as symbolism, and we love it as law. Indeed, those of us who grew up in devout Christian homes tend as adults to carry with us much more of Genesis than we do of Galatians. We interpret "New" in light of the "Old" much more often than Miss Eberstadt might give us credit for doing, and certainly do not view the Hebrew Scriptures as "fodder for our religion," as she accuses Paul of doing. . . .

BRADLEY W. ANDERSON
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In Fernanda Eberstadt's discussion of Harold Bloom's essay on Genesis, I was struck by Bloom's description of God. Bloom states that "God likes to sit under the terebinths at Mamre, devouring roast calf and curds." Now, curds is a dairy product; calf, or veal as it is called, is meat. If God does not believe in *kashrut*, what are we to do? . . .

ABE BRESLAUER
Bay Harbor Island, Florida

FERNANDA EBERSTADT writes:

Albert L. Weeks in his very interesting letter stresses the indivisible kinship between the Hebrew Bible and the New Testament and objects to the dichotomy he says I draw between God's command in Genesis ("be fruitful and multiply") and Jesus's insistence that his disciples forsake their families and follow him, an injunction Mr. Weeks interprets not as an assault on family unity but merely as a request for "firm commitment." In fact, I contrasted the Hebrew Bible's commandment with something slightly different—that is, the New Testament exaltation of chastity.

Jesus and Paul's teachings on marriage and family are two-pronged, stating on the one hand an ideal which only a chosen few can realize and on the other hand offering strictures to improve the conduct of ordinary mortals.

In Matthew 19:10-12, when his disciples infer from Jesus's preaching that "it is not good to marry," Jesus concedes, "All men cannot receive this saying, save they to whom it is given," and goes on to single out as a kind of elect those who "have made themselves eu-

nuchs for the kingdom of heaven's sake."

So, too, Paul in his first letter to the Corinthians writes, "It is good for a man not to touch a woman. Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife and let every woman have her own husband" (I Corinthians 7:1-2). The letter goes on, however, to reassert periodically Paul's wistful desire that "all men were even as I myself," that is, chaste. "But every man doth have his proper gift of God" (I Corinthians 7:7).

Interestingly enough, both these singlings-out of chastity as a perfect and blessed if almost inaccessible state occur in chapters sanctifying marriage and inveighing against divorce. The Christian Gospel's attitude toward husbands and wives may thus be likened to the Hebrew Bible's attitude toward kings, namely, mistrust of an institution whose power threatens to infringe on God's, combined with a certain awe at its potential majesty, mystery, and beauty. In both cases, the conclusion is that it would be better not to have an earthly king/spouse at all, but since people are going to go ahead anyway, they should know how to do it properly.

In any event, this preference for chastity as the condition in which we can most fully worship God is quite foreign to the Hebrew patriarchs and their progeny, who were sustained through slavery and exile by God's animating promise of seed more numerous than the stars in the sky. As Don Schenk rightly suggests in his letter, the shift in attitude over the course of a millennium is no doubt in part historically conditioned: celibacy is a luxury that only an advanced and settled culture can afford. Another such historical shift in attitude is represented in Jesus and Paul's transformation of marriage from a business contract to a sacred and eternal bond; justified by Genesis, this notion is most fully articulated in the Hebrew Bible in the very late Book of Malachi, in which God declares through the Prophet that "divorce is hateful" and condemns the "treachery" of putting away "thy companion and the wife of thy covenant."

As for Jesus's recurrent insistence that all who follow him must leave their families, this particular injunction is merely one inseparable aspect of a larger vision of total self-renunciation. To cite but one assertion of this imperative: "If any

man come to me, and hate not his father, and mother, and wife, and children, and brethren, and sisters, yea, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple" (Luke 14:26). Leaving behind sisters and brothers is the least of it!

Mr. Weeks takes issue with my claim that Jesus's call for radical self-conquest and self-denial in any way entails "hating the world." On the contrary, he writes, Jesus's vision is one of "health, life, renewal in this world, not hatred of or detachment from this world." And yet all the scriptural quotations he marshals as evidence in fact describe "the kingdom of God," a phrase which refers to the glories of the coming messianic age, heralded in the person and the message of Jesus. *That* life, which is life everlasting, *that* world, which is world without end, is constantly contrasted in the Gospels to the world of darkness, sin, ignorance, evil from which we must be redeemed, and to which a proper attitude is the one idealized in the term *contemptus mundi*.

Jesus again and again reminds his followers that neither he nor they have any part of this world: "If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because you are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you" (John 15:18-19). A chapter later, he reassures his disciples, "Be of good cheer; I have overcome the world" (John 16:33).

True, this conception is quite different from the sweet, strong, passionate diplomacy of Paul, who in his mission to win converts to Jesus's teachings seeks to "please all men in all things." It is no less integral a part of Scripture for that.

Finally, Mr. Weeks and Mr. Schenk question my assertion that Jesus urges his followers to "worship God secretly . . . in your closet." Secret worship, Mr. Weeks maintains, may be a fit pastime for "self-righteous . . . ostriches" but finds no friend in Scripture itself. But here is what Jesus says to his disciples in the Gospel according to St. Matthew (and elsewhere): "And when thou prayest, thou shalt not be as the hypocrites are: for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen of men. . . . But thou, when thou prayest, enter into thy closet, and when thou hast shut thy door, pray

to thy Father which is in secret; and thy Father which seeth in secret shall reward thee openly" (Matthew 6:5-6).

To sum up: Jesus's teachings in the Gospels do indeed stress an ethic of individualism, inwardness, withdrawal, self-conquest. At the same time this ethic is entwined with and modified by the differing imperatives of a universal church seeking to join multitudes in "the fellowship of Christ" and the common worship of one God; it continues to lie at the very heart of Christianity.

I would like to thank Bradley W. Anderson for his beautiful and inspiring reminder of what Christian love of the Hebrew Bible can be, and Maurice Schmidt for his kind words and his observations on the Binding of Isaac.

Now to Abe Breslauer: God's taste for calf and curds Harold Bloom infers from Genesis 18, in which Abraham serves a meal of butter and milk and a calf (in that order) to "three men" sent by God, and stands under an oak watching them eat. Let me point out, first, that Abraham's guests are angels in human form, not the Almighty Himself; second, that in the Bible (as opposed to the Oral Law), the prohibition against the mixing of milk and meat refers only to cooking; third (and nevertheless), that the angels, being angels, would surely have acted in accordance with their foreknowledge of the Oral Law, which permits the eating of meat *after* milk, so long as one rinses one's mouth and partakes of a neutral substance like bread (which, as it happens, Abraham has asked his wife Sarah to prepare for their guests); and, lastly, that angels don't eat, anyway; these particular angels, as the great medieval commentator Rashi reminds us, only appeared to be doing so, thus teaching us the importance of politeness to a host.

John Stuart Mill

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

David Stove's "The Columbus Argument" [December 1987] is for several reasons a misreading of John Stuart Mill's philosophy. We find nowhere in Mill an argument "for being anti-conservative in *all* circumstances," as Mr. Stove maintains. Nor does he produce grounds for the assumption that even a misreading of Mill has contributed to a mania for innovation.

Mill did have a love for innovation in both ideas and "experiments in living," but at no point did he sanction innovation for its own sake. As he insisted in *On Liberty* and elsewhere, innovation is always for the sake of the general utility. The point of the celebrated Chapter II of *On Liberty*, "Of the Liberty of Thought and Discussion," is to demand that any proposal—new or old—be subjected to critical scrutiny in order to determine its truth, or its moral worth measured by utility. Although Mill's criterion of utility is both vague and itself subject to legitimate moral scrutiny, it rules out the acceptance of any idea or experiment simply because it might invoke "the Columbus argument."

Mill's plea for experiments in living in *On Liberty* is framed in terms of the fundamental tenet of classical liberalism, which Mill called the principle of liberty: neither individuals, groups, nor states may interfere in liberty of action *unless* such interference is undertaken to prevent harm to others. The flourishing of individuality is always to be encouraged *unless* it threatens the general utility. Because many innovations are injurious to society, we often reject novel proposals and are conservative in many instances, in full compliance with Mill's convictions. Indeed, if the principle of liberty were widely observed today, it would be conservative, for it militates against the doctrines of the redistributivist state.

Mr. Stove's assumption that Mill supports uncritical social initiatives seems to be his alone; so it is difficult to believe that Mill can somehow be held responsible for such ventures. Moreover, Mr. Stove even contradicts himself in blaming so many of our contemporary ills on Mill's purported argument. He says we possess very little knowledge of social processes: "No one understands [human societies] well enough to repair or improve them." If our knowledge of the dynamics of social change is this bad, how can we know that Mill has had such a corrupting influence?

Mr. Stove's contentions about our ignorance of social processes actually find support in Mill himself. As Lewis Feuer has pointed out, it is noteworthy that Mill never wrote a philosophy of history, the vogue of 19th-century thinkers. Although he thought such a philosophy was possible in principle, he

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came to conclude that to articulate such ideas in an empirically respectable manner exceeded the competence of human knowledge.

Incidentally, if Mr. Stove takes the point of view that we are ignorant of the nature of historical processes, there would be justice in his enlisting Hegel as an ally rather than an adversary. Subtract from Hegel his incredible metaphysics of the historical self-realization of spirit, and we are left with the view, urged by Hegel himself apart from his metaphysics, that human societies are moved by forces that characteristically elude the inquiring intellect.

JAMES GOUINLOCK

Emory University
Atlanta, Georgia

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

If, as David Stove claims, John Stuart Mill wrote *On Liberty* to argue "for being anti-conservative in all circumstances" and to justify "certain sexual . . . arrangements of a then-novel kind," it seems odd that he should have written to his co-arranger, Harriet Taylor, in 1855: "On my way here [Rome] . . . I came back to an idea we have talked about, and thought that the best thing to write . . . at present would be a volume on Liberty. So many things might be brought in to it and nothing seems more to be needed—it is a growing need too, for . . . almost all the projects of social reformers of these days are really *liberticide*."

In Chapter I of *On Liberty* Mill warns that "modern reformers" have been "noway behind either churches or sects in their assertion of the right of spiritual domination." In Chapter III he insists that "the majority of moral and social reformers" are jealous and fearful of all "individual spontaneity" and that because "the spirit of improvement is not always a spirit of liberty," "the spirit of liberty . . . may ally itself . . . with the opponents of improvement."

Mr. Stove depicts Mill as blind to the fact that "innovators-for-the-worse have always been far *more* numerous than innovators-for-the-better." The truth is that Mill states unambiguously, again in Chapter III, that "there are but few persons . . . whose experiments [in living], if adopted by others, would be likely to be any improvement on established practice."

Mr. Stove's account of the genesis of *On Liberty* is as faulty as his

description of the book's argument. He alleges that Mill decided to write *On Liberty* because "certain respectable people had dropped him" on account of his "irregular association with Mrs. Harriet Taylor." In fact, Mill had been writing tracts in favor of free speech and individual liberty since his teenage pieces in the *Morning Chronicle* in 1823. The innovation of *On Liberty* was to locate the threat to freedom not in tyrannical, undemocratic governments but in the omnipotent power of the democratic state as conceived of by "the last generation of European liberalism" (Chapter I).

Mill never cared twopence for "society," respectable or otherwise. Before he married her, the people who knew of his relations with the wife of John Taylor would often wonder why Mill did *not* sleep with her. This was disapproval, to be sure, but not of the sort we usually associate with "respectable people" who have too much starch in their collars. Where relations with close friends soured—as with Harriet Martineau, Sarah Austin, Harriet Grote, Thomas Carlyle—Mill's alliance with Mrs. Taylor was not the cause; and it was Mill who did the "dropping."

Mr. Stove airily intimates that Mill's argument for "experiments in living" offered retroactive justification for Robespierre and a convenient apologia for Marx and his followers. In truth, Mill described Robespierre as a man who believed that "his individual judgment respecting the public good is a warrant . . . for exterminating all who are suspected of forming any other judgment, and for setting up a machine to cut off heads . . . till some unknown futurity be accomplished, some Utopia realized." Mill spoke of Marxian socialists with equal harshness. Mr. Stove blames him for the depredations of (unspecified) leftist hoodlums who invoked *On Liberty*, but offers no explanation of why such liberticidal desperadoes as Herbert Marcuse and Noam Chomsky have seen in Mill's liberalism a major impediment to social revolution.

Readers seeking a balanced conservative estimate of Mill should turn from David Stove to Matthew Arnold, who wrote that "Mill was not, perhaps, the great spirit that some of his admirers suppose, but . . . was a singularly acute, ardent, and interesting man, . . . capable of following lights that led him

away from the regular doctrine of philosophical radicalism."

EDWARD ALEXANDER

University of Washington
Seattle, Washington

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

A few months ago, Natasha, a bright young woman I met in Moscow, explained why she was opposed to *glasnost*. "We don't need it," she said, "because the information and opinions that are being published are either unnecessary or positively harmful. We don't need to know how many crimes are committed in our neighborhood. It merely depresses us and encourages the criminal element. Let the experts who need such information have it, but the rest of us have no need for it."

Outside the Moscow synagogue, a group of worshippers told me that they were deeply concerned about the sudden growth of *Pamyat*, an organization dedicated to the preservation of Russian culture and traditions, and, not so incidentally, to a virulent form of anti-Semitism.

Natasha and *Pamyat* came to mind as I read David Stove's defense of conservatism, for Natasha would agree that there is no need to pay attention to innovators, much less to encourage them; and *Pamyat*'s ideologists would happily accept the principle that innovative "experiments in living" are subversive and often dangerous. Indeed, for the better part of this century, the Soviet Union has been the world's preeminent proponent of the "conservative principle," vigorously repressing every "experiment in living" that differed in any significant way from the officially sanctioned way of life.

The fact that the most notorious enemies of human liberty would feel comfortable with Mr. Stove's principle does not in itself demonstrate that it is erroneous, but should at least raise serious doubts about it.

Mr. Stove's account of Mill's libertarian theory is such a gross distortion as to make one wonder when he last read *On Liberty*. Mill nowhere suggests that anyone has a duty to welcome all innovators or to refrain from resisting them. On the contrary, he explicitly says that individuals whose actions are "prejudicial to the interests of others . . . [are] accountable and may be subjected either to social or to legal punishment if society is of

the opinion that one or the other is requisite for its protection."

Mill argues that a person cannot be permitted to sell himself into slavery because "[t]he principle of freedom cannot require that he should be free not to be free." What is true of individuals is true of groups of individuals. The whole point of Mill's essay was to argue that society should give wide latitude to individual expression and to individual "life-styles," but he would have vigorously resisted any suggestion that societies should be permitted to sell their people into slavery, whether of the Communist or the fascist form, or to impose upon them any of the horrors to which Mr. Stove alludes.

Mill would have allowed for resistance to the Robespierres, the Lenins, and the Pol Pots of the world, just as he held that freedom of speech did not preclude the punishment of a demagogue who incited a mob gathered outside the home of a grain dealer to riot. Moreover, he explicitly stated that he would not countenance anyone's "forcibly seizing on the government of the world and making it do his bidding in spite of itself."

Despotism is no innovation. The greater part of mankind in all ages, including our own, has lived under one form of it or another.

The most significant political innovation of modern times is liberal democracy, an experiment brought into being on this continent by Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Franklin, and their colleagues through a violent revolution against the forces of conservatism. Through their genius, they forged a state that enshrined human liberty—including the freedom to engage in social experiments—as one of its fundamental values.

Many of those experiments are destined to fail. But so long as they neither compromise the liberty of others nor threaten them with tangible harm, why should they not be given a fair trial by those who are dedicated to them? This is the very principle upon which the great diversity of religious practices and faiths in America has been based.

Mill acknowledged—contrary to Mr. Stove's misrepresentation of his position—that "there are but few persons . . . whose experiments, if adopted by others, would be likely to be any improvement on established practice." Without those few, however, "human life would become a stagnant pool."

In anticipation of the criticisms of such people as J.F. Stephen and David Stove, Natasha and the members of *Pamyat*, Mill observed, "Originality is the one thing which unoriginal minds cannot feel the use of."

These superconservatives are completely unaware of the fact that they share a fundamental assumption with extremist "liberals" (who are not *liberal* at all): the assumption that broad personal liberties are inconsistent with the preservation of fundamental social, religious, and moral values and the maintenance of law and order. This leads the superconservatives to argue against what they see as excessive liberty, and the extremist "liberals" to argue against the preservation of old values. The genius of the Framers of the American Constitution and of Mill was that they recognized that this assumption is simply erroneous. They saw that the *best* way to preserve our most precious values was to restrain the government from any interference with individual liberty, so long as the exercise of that liberty caused no immediate harm to any other person.

Mr. Stove's conclusion, that philosophy is important, is correct. But philosophers do their profession no service when they misrepresent important philosophical works and develop fallacious arguments.

BURTON M. LEISER

Pace University
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

I read David Stove's "The Columbus Argument" with great interest. The questions raised by the widespread belief that all innovation should be welcomed prompt the examination of another currently popular attitude which is rarely challenged.

It is frequently argued that to take certain deterrent actions against threatening situations is undesirable because such actions may set a "dangerous precedent," leading to the erosion of our liberties in less threatening situations. I would suggest, however, that every time we act or *do not act* in response to a crisis we inevitably set a precedent. For example, when we fail to oppose terrorist activities, are we not setting a precedent of acquiescence which may embolden such groups to act with ever-increasing militancy in the future?

Surely "the dangerous precedent argument" needs closer scrutiny.

LILLIAN ARONSOHN
Fort Lauderdale, Florida

DAVID STOVE writes:

There are just three main ways in which someone could dissent from what I said about the Columbus argument. They could say: (1) that the argument is not as bad as I said it is; (2) that its destructive influence has not been as great as I said it has been; (3) that the part played by John Stuart Mill in its diffusion was less than it was.

None of my present critics says (1) above. So we can forget about that line of dissent.

As to (2): according to James Gouinlock, I actually contradicted myself by claiming to know that the Columbus argument has been immensely destructive while also saying that no one knows how to improve societies like ours. Mr. Gouinlock's mistake here is palpable. Most of us know no way to improve a TV set, but we all know a thousand ways to wreck one; and it is just the same with our societies.

But Mr. Gouinlock is quite right when he says I did not "produce grounds" for my belief that the Columbus argument has been immensely destructive. I just took it to be obvious (a) that that argument has been immensely influential, and (b) that one way to make a society unworkable is to infuse it with a presumption in favor of innovation. It still seems to me that both these things *are* obvious, just as it is obvious, say, that injecting TV sets with gasoline (a) has *not* been immensely popular, and (b) is one way to make them unworkable. There is no need to "produce grounds" for such beliefs.

As to (3) above: I am rightly reminded, by both Edward Alexander and Burton M. Leiser, that Mill warned us that "there are but few persons . . . whose experiments, if adopted by others, would be likely to be any improvement on established practice." Quite! So why, then, did he *publish to all the world a general argument for the encouragement of innovations*? This is a typical specimen of Mill's irresponsibility and hypocrisy. It is as if you first made the Patent Office unworkable by loudly encouraging everyone to apply for a patent and then salved your conscience by adding *sotto voce* that most applications are bound to fail. Of course every innovator will be en-

tirely convinced that he is one of those exceptional "few persons." So the practical result of Mill's warning will be precisely nil.

A similar comment applies to the qualifications which Mill placed (as Mr. Leiser and Mr. Gouinlock remind us) on the desirability of "experiments in living": principally the qualification that they must not be such as to harm other people. In practice this qualification excludes nothing, for two reasons. One is that every social innovator is convinced that his "experiment" will be the reverse of harmful in the long run, or once it has been imposed on *all* the world; and who is entitled, on Mill's principles, to say he is wrong? The other reason is that the more radical of social innovators (Socrates, for example, or the pedophiles) are always advancing novel ideas as to what constitutes "harm." Such people will easily agree to a "no-harm" rule; but they will not mean by it what you or I mean.

Mill said, as Mr. Leiser reminds us, that where openness to innovation is lacking, human life is "a stagnant pool." The phrase seems unduly opprobrious when you consider that *all* human life, until (historically speaking) about five minutes ago, has lacked such openness. If the spectacle of human life affords hardly more diversion to a philosopher than the spectacle of, say, ant life, is this a reproach to human life or to the philosopher? Most people have always found their own lives interesting enough, indeed painfully interesting. If a philosopher finds nothing interesting in them, well, that is just too bad.

But the stagnant-pool kind is at least a possible kind of human life, whether desirable or not. Mill's ideal of human life, on the other hand, is a manifestly impossible one: life as a universal and perpetual discussion group, and one—just to add to its charm—with a rule forbidding any question ever to be closed. And while there are, of course, some impossible ideals which it is not disastrous to *attempt* to realize, Mill's does not even have that modest recommendation.

Harry Dexter White

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

McCarthyism as I understand it had (and still has) partly to do with playing fast and loose with the truth about a person's life for political

purposes. I can think of no better (i.e., worse) example than that provided by Peter Collier and David Horowitz ["McCarthyism: The Last Refuge of the Left," January] when they refer to the late Harry Dexter White as an official in the Truman administration "who had committed suicide after being named as a Soviet agent." In fact, Harry Dexter White suffered a heart attack in September 1947, four months after leaving the International Monetary Fund. When Elizabeth Bentley testified before the House Un-American Activities Committee, making her charges against White in July 1948, he said that he was "shocked," that her charges were "fantastic," and he asked to come before the committee, which he did on August 13, where he denied the Bentley charges and answered all of the Committee's questions. Following the Committee hearing in Washington, White was taken ill with chest pains on the train to New Hampshire. The next day he saw a widely respected local practitioner in New Hampshire, whose diagnosis was heart trouble. White died of a heart attack late on the afternoon of Monday, August 16 at his summer home at Blueberry Hill. Rumors of mystery surrounding his death were dispelled by Dr. George S. Emerson, in an interview with the *Boston Globe*, which reproduced the death certificate reflecting the doctor's finding that the cause of death was "coronary attack due to disease of coronary arteries of the heart." This account of the causes of White's death is further confirmed in *Harry Dexter White: A Study in Paradox* by David Rees, published by Coward, McCann, Geoghegan in 1973.

Messrs. Collier and Horowitz believe that the term "McCarthyism" as it is used today is too blunt an instrument. Perhaps they are right. If so, we need another term for such careless slurs.

VICTOR NAVASKY

Editor, *The Nation*
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

This may add to the excellent article by Peter Collier and David Horowitz about the use by the Left of the term "McCarthyism" as a smear to silence any expression of concern about leftist connections to Leninism in our country.

Messrs. Collier and Horowitz speak knowledgeably about the

use of the term to prevent discussion about persons in public life who may be working assiduously for the cause of Leninism. Thus we see how much easier it is to post a reporting team outside a house in Washington to find out if Gary Hart is with a woman other than his wife than to get any investigative reporter in all the United States to look into the political background of the man who chairs the vital Western Hemisphere subcommittee of the House Foreign Affairs Committee, George Crockett.

In that same vein, ABC's *Viewpoint* program invited, among others, the key newsmen from the Hart "investigation" to appear on a show about the press's "duty" to fulfill "the people's right to know." But when a member of the audience, in the question-and-answer period, asked why the major organs of the American press consistently failed to look into the matter of Communism in our midst, Ted Koppel, the show's moderator, rather quickly ended the "interruption." But interestingly, the man who did the Hart "investigation" added something to the effect that the questioner's question was a kind of McCarthyism.

Now the truth is that the Communist party, U.S.A. [CPUSA] has now and has always had a large stake in the screen of McCarthyism. Few persons recognize that McCarthyism is right in line with all the other "isms" that have played so large a role in the polemical history of the Communist movement: Leninism, revisionism, infantism, Hitlerism, Stalinism, Marxism, ad infinitum and ad nauseam. In the dark recesses of time, in the early 1950's, the exact originator of the term was lost—but you may be sure that among the survivors of the CPUSA of that era there remains great pride in their belief that they played a major part in making that term of opprobrium *au courant* then and forever. . . .

The CPUSA has always argued that any derogatory reference to Leninism is a "Big Lie." This, of course, is to associate any derogatory truth about Leninism with Hitler's propaganda technique. But Leninists tell lies about themselves all the time. . . . One is immediately reminded of Fidel Castro's comment, after he had clamped Leninism on Cuba, "If we had told them [the people of Cuba] when we were still in the mountains what we were going to do when we came down

from the mountains, they might not have let us come down from the mountains." And reminded as well of Sandinista promises about how Nicaragua would be run—promises made before the Sandinistas got power. . . .

There is a question that is current on Capitol Hill today: does the Democratic leadership in the House really want a Communist spread to begin with Nicaragua, continue throughout Central America and Mexico and into our own country? But Jim Wright, the Speaker of the House, who is an honorable man, says that that kind of talk is "McCarthyism" and anyone who suggests such a thing is using a "McCarthyite" tactic. In other words, don't talk about any spread of Leninism, any threat to our country or any other country—that's McCarthyism, that's McCarthyite tactics.

Which means that Leninism itself cannot be defined, for almost no one knows what Leninism is except the Leninists themselves. . . . Communism, yes; that's what McCarthyism is against. Marxism, yes; Marxism is what people on both sides think is Leninism. But Marxism is not Leninism. . . . What Leninism is is the brutal pursuit of political power—no holds barred. Leninism is: *anything is justifiable in the destruction of the capitalist system.* . . . So you have the endless lies and cheating in instance after instance all through the history of Leninism from the coming to power in Russia in 1917 to the latest treaty that any Leninist nation has signed and broken. . . .

Leninism was called Stalinism in the 1930's, but nobody realized that Stalinism was simply Leninism in the open. It took Solzhenitsyn to say that everything was already in place by Stalin's time and it was Lenin who had put it in place before he died. . . .

So let us begin calling a Leninist a Leninist and Leninism Leninism. And by thus defining Leninism for what it is, we can show why the smear of McCarthyism has been patented by the Left. We must *know* our enemy, and that means defining him. To speak of the threats of Communism or of Marxism is to . . . lump too many things together and thereby confuse our own ranks. . . .

These are the things that need to be said in the battle against charges by the Left of McCarthyism. . . . We must say, point-blank,

to those who call us McCarthyites: What do *you* know about Leninism? And what do *you* know about the nature and methods of Leninists? What do you know about the entire history of Leninism, its growth and development and its world intentions? If you do not know about Leninism in all its aspects, then your charges of McCarthyism are the clearest proof that you are under the domination of Leninism, naively or otherwise. . . .

Odessa, Texas

ED LAHART

PETER COLLIER AND DAVID HOROWITZ write:

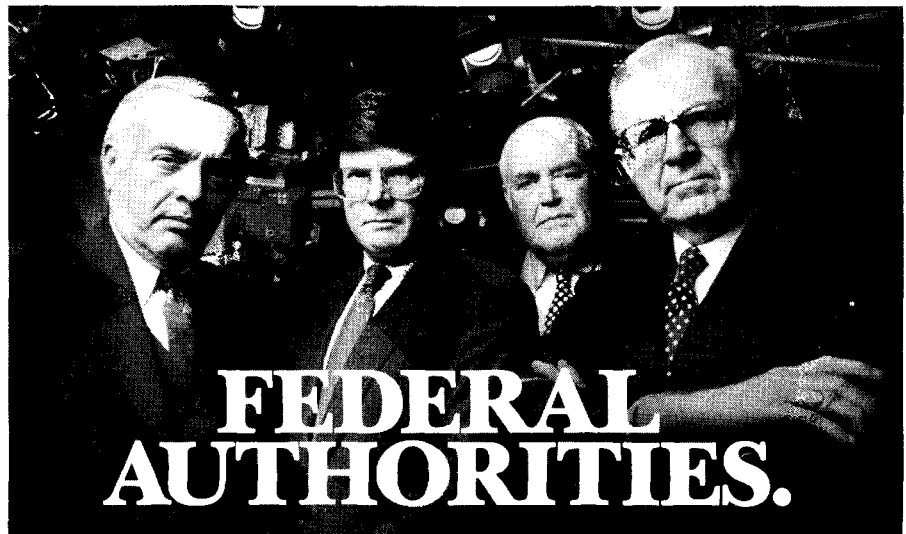
Harry Dexter White had been accused of being a Soviet agent; he died soon after, as Victor Navasky writes, of a heart attack and not as a suicide. This now-corrected fact, however, has no bearing whatsoever on the point we were making about White, or indeed on any of the points in our article. The real question is, why is Mr. Navasky making such an issue of this relatively trivial matter, surrounding

it with fusty rhetoric and hypertrophied accusation? We can only conclude that he is frustrated by his inability to find something more serious—something in our argument itself—to complain about, and so settles for a little piece of arcana instead. Since he hasn't challenged the substantive points we made, we must assume that he endorses what we said.

Vietnam

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In "Remembering Vietnam" [December 1987], H. J. Kaplan writes that the Indochina war "disrupted and almost destroyed civil society . . . in our own country." It should be pointed out, however, that this domestic political havoc was not entirely unprecedented. A loss of civility also accompanied modern America's other "limited" war—Korea. I submit that Vietnam demonstrated again what we should have already known from the Korean war—that protracted, inconclusive conflicts are incompatible with American democracy.



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Further, it is doubtful that the generation which fought World War II would have tolerated Vietnam any better than its children did. To be sure, the impatience of earlier generations would undoubtedly have manifested itself in other ways, as the contrast between the domestic political turmoil which accompanied Korea and Vietnam illustrates.

Modern America's two "limited" wars were separated by only a little over a decade, and while the years between them seemed long at the time, in retrospect the distance seems short—increasingly short. Mr. Kaplan's work is perceptive and eloquent. I can only add that our comprehension of Vietnam might be further enhanced by placing Vietnam in the broader postwar context which includes Korea. How did the Korean experience influence (or fail to influence) the Kennedy and Johnson administrations? Further, by scrutinizing the public reactions and domestic political repercussions of the early 50's and those of the late 60's and early 70's we can learn much about just how dramatically the country changed in what was historically a very short space of time. Korea and Vietnam are modern America's "limited" wars—they are also modern America's tragic wars.

JAMES E. SALYERS
Ashmore, Illinois

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

H.J. Kaplan's account of the Vietnam experience is both sensitive and sensible, and rooted in a believable historical framework. It has the ring of humane objectivity in its judgments on the parade of clowns—conservative as well as liberal—who intruded on that tragic corner of the world, and, in that most cutting phrase of combat soldiers, finally "cut out."

Mr. Kaplan mentions a fantasy these events aroused in him. His final paragraph prompted one in me, perhaps as a response to the deep chagrin I feel over the continuing sanctimonious utterances of the McNamaras, Halberstams, Stones, and Weickers: a film or television script, written by someone with the poetic powers of a Tom Stoppard and with Mr. Kaplan's collaboration, . . . that captures the sweep and echoes the sadness and shame encompassed in "Remembering Vietnam."

EDWARD COHEN
Lambertville, New Jersey

Black and Middle Class

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Shelby Steele has written one of the finest essays on black American identity I have read in a long while ["On Being Black and Middle Class," January]. As a university official, I confront many young black students who seem to be caught up in similar double binds but refuse to entertain ideas like those of Mr. Steele's without becoming hostile. The peer pressure to "be black" on a major university campus is enormous. And the courage to think independently of such pressure is what Mr. Steele is asking for. I applaud him for bringing up a tough issue and asking the black middle class to confront the racial problem in the United States in a different manner from the way it has been viewed for the past twenty-five years.

KEN CHAWKINS
Los Angeles, California

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Shelby Steele's "On Being Black and Middle Class" describes experiences I have observed over the past two years in working with young black men and women who, although not middle-class in the sense of being college-educated professionals, are by no means poor or lower-class.

Working for the operations department of a major brokerage house, they are at a salary level similar to that of civil servants working for the city or post office. As in Mr. Steele's article, many of these young blacks feel a responsibility to respond favorably to certain opinions, persons, and lingo.

Islam, even for those who are Christian, is seen as a "black" religion and Louis Farrakhan as a "true" black. Radicalism of the Farrakhan sort is seen as the "true" black way of thinking, although many of these same people . . . voted for Ronald Reagan in 1984. . . .

To be fair, this symptom can also be found in the Jewish community, where there are "correct" opinions about school prayer, or, for that matter, about all church-state matters. . . . What makes Mr. Steele's article so important, however, is that in the case of the black community, the effect of conforming to "correct" attitudes is to keep the poor in the ghettos and out of the American mainstream. . . .

IRA SLOMOWITZ
Teaneck, New Jersey

John R. Tunis

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

As I read Joseph Epstein's "A Boy's Own Author" [December 1987], I had a disquieting reaction. Could it be that Mr. Epstein was the brother I never had reading over my shoulder as I pored diligently over the pages of *The Kid From Tomkinsville*? Did he also read and reread Clair Bee's Chip Hilton series? Did he have a mother who shouted "Go to bed already!" when he stayed up well beyond his bedtime reading the stirring tales of John R. Tunis? Could there be another person alive who read *Sport* magazine like the Talmud; who still reads a newspaper from back to front so that the news of sports can be imbibed first? Is there really a person who remembers Al Silverman and Ed Fitzgerald? Please, Mr. Epstein, don't stop here, these memories are delicious.

HERBERT LONDON
New York University
New York City

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Joseph Epstein's "A Boy's Own Author" was refreshing criticism. The piece reminded me of the best of Ford Maddox Ford, for instance his essays on Stephen Crane and W.H. Hudson. Good stuff all around.

SANDY McADAMS
Charlottesville, Virginia

Miami

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

George Russell's review of the books on Miami by T.D. Allman, Joan Didion, and David Rieff ["Mooning Over Miami," Books in Review, January] was especially welcome in its insightfulness about the city. Too many of the reviews which appeared elsewhere, as well as much of the uninformed news-magazine coverage, have concentrated, mindlessly, on the notion that the city has come to play a role in our culture only very recently—in fact, post-*Miami Vice*.

An informed view, of course, is aware that for most of this century America has been fixated on Florida in general and Miami in particular, as Mr. Russell notes when he speaks of "Miami's cyclical rounds of exuberance." Five years ago I published a long article in *Modernist Studies* in which I examined the role of madcap advertising for Florida land development

in the 20s and 30's as indicative of important trends in America. . . . Interestingly, Ben Hecht, mentioned by Mr. Russell as an example of a writer who celebrated another city (I presume he means Chicago), was also involved in the Miami bubble of the late 20's and his autobiography, *Child of the Century*, has much on this. . . .

MARK BERNHEIM

Miami University of Ohio
Oxford, Ohio

Veterans Memorial

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Where does George Szamuely ["Hollywood Goes to Vietnam," January] get off denigrating the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in the course of his diatribe against the current crop of Vietnam war movies? The memorial does not, as he states, "record the demise of some 58,000 individual Americans, thereby rendering their dying . . . pointless." As a matter of fact, their dying *was* pointless, but for most of us the wall commemorates the sacrifice in a wholly fitting manner, embracing common and uncommon heroism in a single heartbreaking sweep of black marble.

Mr. Szamuely, like Tom Wolfe before him, misses the whole point of the memorial, which is the names. To those at play in the fields of government the names make a statement: You want to fight a war? Here's what it costs. No disrespect to the veterans of Iwo Jima, the Army of the Tennessee, or any of the countless other warriors whose monuments grace our nation's capital, but I think we have finally got it right.

RALPH HITCHENS

Gaithersburg, Maryland

Poles and Jews

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

Milwaukee's Polish-Jewish Forum, which includes members of the Polish-American Congress and the American Jewish Committee, has, over the past year, been discussing issues of common concern. As far as COMMENTARY and other

leading Jewish magazines are concerned, we regret the failure to review any of the books which have appeared in recent years presenting World War II and the Holocaust from other than Jewish perspectives. Among the numerous significant studies that have appeared in recent years which merit review, analysis, and discussion are: Norman A. Davies, *Heart of Europe: A Short History of Poland* (1984, 1986), and Richard Lukas, *Forgotten Holocaust: The Poles Under German Occupation, 1939-1944* (1986).

A one-sided monologue on the subject does not contribute to Jewish insights into that catastrophe or to Polish-Jewish understanding of the nearly 1,000-year long history of Jewish life and settlement in Poland and its meaning for us today. Neither attacks on Polish Stalinists nor sentimental descriptions of visits to the ruins of Polish Jewry, which have appeared in recent issues of COMMENTARY, provide a sufficient description of the conditions under which Jewish life in Poland came to an end.

BRUCE FETTER

DONALD PIENKOS

Polish-Jewish Forum
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

AIDS and Needles

TO THE EDITOR OF COMMENTARY:

In my letter in the February issue commenting on Michael A. Fumento's "AIDS: Are Heterosexuals at Risk?" [November 1987], I omitted one point that warrants stressing: we should immediately make it possible for fertile women with AIDS to be sterilized. (I hope persuasion will suffice.) Nobody should conceive AIDS-infected babies. Yet statistics indicate that a growing number of babies with AIDS are being born, fated to die an early and painful death.

While I am at it: I advocated "decriminalizing the sale of needles" to drug addicts, not, as Mr. Fumento suggested in his reply, free distribution of needles. The cost of the needles is negligible, but free distribution would mean that: (1) the government would go through

elaborate procedures to determine who is to supply the needles, wasting time and in all likelihood buying the wrong ones; (2) the government would go through elaborate procedures to determine who is a bona-fide addict entitled to receive the needles (some bureaucratic authority would have to be charged with the determination, and the process would be time-consuming, costly, and arbitrary); (3) since the government has indicated it would want to evaluate the effect of its new policy, a selection of drug addicts would be necessary to determine who is to receive the needles and who is to be in the control group—more bureaucracy, cost, and arbitrariness; (4) finally, bureaucratic studies with volumes of statistics would "evaluate" the results of the "experiment"—with predictably ambiguous results and warring bureaucracies. All this, as I have indicated, would be time-consuming, costly, and unnecessary. There is no way, incidentally, of determining the success or failure of the "experiment" with free needles, since the recipients would donate them after use to nonrecipients. Never mind—this is the accepted way of spending and swelling the bureaucracy.

Simply withdrawing the foolish laws or regulations which prohibit the purchase of needles without a prescription would cost nothing. Therefore, it won't be done, for politicians and bureaucrats seem to have sworn a sacred oath never to do anything that costs nothing and does not require administration.

Nobody can ever be certain that the legal sale of needles will reduce AIDS infection. Addicts have many motives other than costs and legal obstacles for sharing needles. Yet the unavailability of legal needles has not prevented anyone from becoming an addict. Thus if the legal availability of needles possibly prevents even one AIDS infection, we have made a net gain. "Free distribution," however, despite its seductive ring, will delay and probably prevent this net gain in the end.

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The Return of Eugenics

Richard John Neuhaus

EUGENICS—that is, the movement to improve and even perfect the human species by technological means—arose in the late 19th century and flourished in this country and in Europe until the 1930's. Then it was challenged by scientific counterevidence, and by growing uneasiness about its racist implications. Later, or so the story was told, eugenics was definitively discredited by the Third Reich which enlisted its doctrines and practices in support of unspeakable crimes against humanity. But now, in the journals and in the textbooks, the story is being told differently. The problem, it is said, was not so much with eugenics itself but with the Nazis: they abused eugenics, they went too far, they were extremists.

Thus in the longer view of history, the horror of the Third Reich may have effected but a momentary pause in the theory and practice of eugenics. For today, four decades later, eugenics is back, and it gives every appearance of returning with a vengeance in the form of developments ranging from the adventuresome to the bizarre to the ghoulish: the manufacture of synthetic children, the fabrication of families, artificial sex, and new ways of using and terminating undesired human life.

To be sure, the literature on all sides of the current disputes about these developments remains riddled with references to the Nazi experience. But the mention of troubling similarities to the Third Reich is, as it should be, accompanied and qualified by other observations. No responsible parties suggest that America is, or is likely to become, Nazi Germany. That is patently absurd. What happens here is and will be distinctively American. And, because this is America, there are political, legal, and moral resources to resist scenarios of the worse inevitably coming to the worst.

In addition, the great majority of today's eugenicists take pains to distance themselves from any hint of racialism, although some very respectable

proponents of "population control" are not averse to writing about "inferior" population groups. Further, it must be acknowledged that there have in fact been very impressive technological advances, some of which are indeed breakthroughs to uncharted regions of control over the human condition—and some of which hold high promise for reducing misery and enhancing life. There is no room in this discussion for Luddite reactionaries who claim to discern in every technological change the visage of the "brave new world." Finally, those who take a favorable view of the developments in dispute would seem to be motivated by the best of intentions. With few exceptions, their language is the winsome one of progress, of reason, and, above all, of compassion.

All that said, we are nonetheless witnessing the return of eugenics. And with it have come questions, inescapably moral questions, for which we appear to have no good answers. Indeed, it is doubtful that we still have a sufficiently shared moral vocabulary even for debating what good answers might be. Yet whether we like it or not, these questions are already being answered from one end of the life cycle to the other in terms that, were one not wary of alarmism, might be described as alarming.

TO BEGIN, literally, at the beginning, consider first the putting together of human gametes (sperm or egg) in order to facilitate new ways of having babies, and to produce babies of higher quality.

It is hard not to sympathize with couples who want children but cannot have them because of infertility. What are they to do? Of course there is adoption, but the "right kind" of child is hard to find, and getting one can be very expensive. (One and a half million abortions per year has put a considerable dent in the supply side of the American adoption market, plus adoption is one area where discrimination on the basis of race or handicap is still eminently respectable.) In addition, many people want a child that is, at least in part, produced from their own biological raw materials. Techniques for meeting this market demand are several.

Artificial insemination by husband (AIH) has been with us for some time and is relatively

RICHARD JOHN NEUHAUS, a Lutheran pastor, is director of the Rockford Institute Center on Religion and Society in New York. His most recent book is *The Catholic Moment: The Paradox of the Church in the Postmodern World* (Harper & Row).

straightforward. Artificial insemination by donor (AID) is technically identical but introduces a third party to the relationship, or, more accurately, biologically excludes the husband. These techniques are really quite simple and lend themselves to do-it-yourself procedures—with a little help from your friends.

A recently publicized example was the case of an Episcopalian priest who wanted a baby but definitely not a husband. She invited three friends over (two of them priests) to masturbate for her, and she then impregnated herself with the mixture of their sperm. The purpose of having several sperm sources, she explained on national television, was to avoid knowing who the father was, and thus to make sure that the child would have an intimate bond to no one but herself. The child is now three years old and the mother has declared that she intends to have another baby by the same procedure. The *Washington Post* described her as the first artificially inseminated priest in history, which is probably true. Her bishop, Paul Moore of New York, appeared with her on television and gave his unqualified blessing to this undertaking, citing the need for the church to come to terms with the modern world.

In vitro fertilization (IVF) is yet another procedure. It involves the woman being given hormones to stimulate egg production. The eggs are then "harvested" and mixed with sperm from the husband or someone else, and some eggs that become fertilized are placed in the woman's uterus. But ethical questions have been raised about the use and disposal of the many "superfluous" embryos that are not transferred to the uterus. Some practitioners of this technique—confronted with the argument that anything with the potential of becoming human life is human life—resolve the problem to their moral satisfaction by declaring that very little embryos are "pre-embryos." On the other hand, there is intense interest—on the part of drug companies and genetic researchers—in letting such embryos develop in the laboratory so that they can be used for scientific experiments.

An additional problem is "superfluous" fetuses. Because the technique is time-consuming and expensive, and because success is by no means assured, "extra" embryos are placed in the uterus in the hope that at least one will "take." With disturbing frequency, this results in two or three or more very healthy fetuses. When the procedure produces more fetuses than the mother wants or, in some cases, than she can safely carry to term, the practice is to use an ultrasound probe to guide a needle which punctures the hearts of the fetuses to be eliminated. Doctors who do this allow that there may be a moral problem in terminating fetuses that they helped bring into being. But then, it is observed, the morality of the thing is really not that different from the elimination or experimental use of unwanted embryos.

Yet another option for the infertile couple is to

elect embryo transfer. Here the husband, or someone else, contributes the sperm with which a "donor" woman is inseminated. The resulting embryo is then "washed" from her uterus and placed in the infertile wife. This procedure is still somewhat experimental and poses high risks to both the donor woman and the embryo, but we are assured that progress is being made in ironing out the difficulties.

An additional option, surrogate motherhood, was the center of a media storm in 1986 in connection with the Baby M case in New Jersey. The terminology is misleading, since the woman is not a surrogate or substitute but is in fact the mother. The procedure might better be called "term" or "contract" motherhood, for she contracts to act as mother only until the child is brought to term. More than a dozen states are now considering measures to legitimate contracts for such rent-a-womb arrangements, but the debate over the practice has deeply divided feminists, and the Left generally. The anxiety is over the using of women, typically women who are vulnerable and in need of the money. There is also objection to what is, after all, a particularly gross capitalist act, even if between consenting adults.

Writing in the *Nation*, Katha Pollitt further complains that the man in these cases wants "a perfect baby with his genes and a medically vetted mother who would get out of his life forever immediately after giving birth." (Some contracts also stipulate that the mother will abort the child if there is evidence that it is not up to standard.) Miss Pollitt observes that no other class of father—natural, step, or adoptive—can lay down such conditions. While making some predictably contemptuous remarks about the Vatican's position on reproduction, she does side with Rome about one thing. "You don't have a right to a child, any more than you have a right to a spouse. You only have the right to try to have one. Goods can be distributed according to ability to pay or need. People can't. It's really that simple."

But Katha Pollitt and others of like mind do not appreciate the reach of the eugenic vision, which is to eliminate the limits and risks in what was once deemed to be natural. In any event, contract motherhood is but a very small part of the transformations now under way. In ten years the procurers in that business have been able to sign up only five hundred women. It is an enterprise that fades in comparison with the real growth areas in the synthetic-child business.

IN THE PAST, a distinction was drawn between positive and negative eugenics (though in usage the terms were sometimes reversed). Positive eugenics was thought to be relatively innocent, simply a matter of breeding good human stock in order to improve the race by increasing the number of the physically and mentally fit. Negative eugenics, on the other hand,

made a lot of people nervous, since it meant preventing the birth of the unfit or eliminating them after they were born. In America in the 1920's more than half the states had mandatory sterilization laws applicable to people who fell into various categories of unfitness. (The laws were enforced mainly in California.) And of course, as the textbooks say, Nazi Germany took both positive and negative eugenics altogether too far.

The distinction between positive and negative eugenics is no longer always helpful. For instance, intervention to eliminate a defective gene rather than to eliminate a defective fetus may be viewed as either positive or negative. Still, some of the more striking changes today are in the area of the positive improvement of the human stock. Indeed, what is now being done and proposed makes earlier efforts at improving the race (for example, the socially and morally clumsy *Lebensborn* program for breeding the SS elite with superior Reich female stock) seem pitifully primitive.

At present, research focuses on detecting and remedying genetic ills or ailments by removing or adding genes. But discontents with the human condition as it is now constituted are almost infinitely expansive, and since it is almost impossible to argue against the proposition that the quality of human beings we have been turning out to date leaves much to be desired, the pressure to move the limits of intervention may be near irresistible. Is asthma a genetic disease? If asthma, why not baldness, or shortness, or having the "wrong" color eyes? And surely we still focus on diseases only because we have this ancient idea that medical interventions should be therapeutic. Instead of restricting ourselves to curing diseases, however broadly defined, why not be more positive and aim at the desiderata of human life? The combination of reproduction technology and engineering, or either one by itself, may be able to assure the production of socially desired personality types. In that event, presumably, "society" will decide which types are desired.

The enzymes that slice DNA produce nucleotide bases that scientists call "sticky ends" because they merge so easily with the genetic structure of another organism. Many are troubled precisely by the sticky ends to which this technology is being put. But there are some who are not troubled.

Lloyd McAulay, a New York patent lawyer, has written, "I understand the fear that we may be letting the genie out of the bottle as we expand our ability to alter biological evolution. I do not share that fear." He allows that there should be some control over developments "until we learn a bit more about where we are going." But, all in all, there is no cause for anxiety since what is happening is not really so new. "Switching genes around strikes me as little more than expedited breeding," he writes. "As an ethical issue, whether or not we wish to do that with human beings may not be much different from whether or not we

wish to breed human beings." "Expedited breeding"—it is a reassuring phrase.

Another comforting voice over the years has been the editorial page of the *New York Times*, although, to be sure, the comfort is attended by stylistic rumblings of deeply pondered concern. Whether the subject is genetic engineering or experimenting with human embryos, the *Times* typically informs us that it is too late to raise the kinds of questions we wanted to ask. For example: "Critics are concerned that making life forms patentable will give animal and eventually human life too much in common with commodities, leading to disrespect for both. But society has already passed that point." On the *Times* editorial page, the big decisions are made by society, and society is forever busily bustling along. The editors simply report their sightings of it as it passes one point after another.

The *Times* acknowledges that genetic engineering is "at first sight disquieting," but the editorialist has taken a second look and concludes that "It's hard to object to improving a species' inherent characteristics." As to problems we may have with engineering that does change the "inherent characteristics" of a species, we are told that "Such conundrums still lie in the realm of science fiction." They may be as much as ten or twenty years off and, as John Maynard Keynes suggested, in the long run we are all dead.

One cannot help being struck by the blithe assumption that we can still agree on "the inherent characteristics of a species"—of the human species, for instance. For we have, after all, been through a systematic assault upon the idea that there is anything "inherent" or "natural" in the makeup or behavior of human beings. With respect to sexual identity and behavior, gender relations, familial bondings, and a host of other questions, the human condition is declared to be boundlessly various and malleable. In all these areas, the protester's appeals to what is natural are dismissed with enlightened contempt. But now, as we intervene to restructure human beings genetically, technicians and their apologists assume the tone of Thomistic philosophers explaining the self-evident truths of natural law, assuring us that they recognize and will respect what is natural, inherent, and essential to being human.

This is, at best, an instance of what Allan Bloom calls *debonaire nihilism*. More likely, it is a desperate effort to conceal from others, and from themselves, the consequences of what they do; of what they cannot bring themselves not to do—because it is possible, because it is progress, because the adventure of doing the thing that could never before be done is near to irresistible.

ONE such thing is the use of fetal tissue. Fetal brain, pancreas, and live tissue is, it is said, admirably suited for the treatment of Parkinson's disease, Alzheimer's disease,

Huntington's chorea, spinal-cord injuries, and leukemia. Fetal tissue is also excellent for implant treatments because it grows faster, is more adaptable, and causes less immunological rejection than adult tissue. Whatever one thinks of abortion, it is argued, it is a shame to let the material go to waste. There are literally millions of people who might benefit from these human parts. Dr. Abraham Lieberman of New York University Medical Center says of these developments, "This is to medicine what superconductivity is to physics."

Admittedly, there are concerns about collusion between abortionists and physicians, about how to decide whether the fetus is actually dead, about commercial trafficking in fetal parts, and about women becoming pregnant in order to produce fetal parts to order. Those are only some of the concerns that have been raised. But the decision to move ahead on this front is, we are told, another point that society has passed. As the director of the American Parkinson Association observes, "The majority of people with the disease couldn't care less about the ethical questions—they just want something that works."

Both pro- and anti-abortion groups have expressed uneasiness about the use of fetal parts. Pro-choice groups worry that, as with contract motherhood, it could invite the exploitation of women's bodies to produce custom parts, as it were. Pro-life groups worry that it could make abortion seem more attractive to some women because the parts would be used to help other people. "The worst possible ethical evil of all this," says Arthur Caplan of the Center for Biomedical Ethics at the University of Minnesota, "would be to create lives simply to end them and take the parts."

Unencumbered by the delicately nuanced inhibitions of some ethicists, however, the general media are generally enthusiastic. *Newsweek*, for instance, allows that some controls are necessary "to keep fetal research from becoming barbarous." But that does not blunt *Newsweek's* keenness on the new technology which "has created a surge of interest in fetal-tissue implantation, and research both here and abroad is beginning to offer an exciting glimpse at treatments that could lie ahead."

Recently a California woman asked a medical ethicist whether she could be artificially inseminated with sperm from her father, who has Alzheimer's disease. She intended to abort the fetus so that the brain tissue could be transplanted into her father's brain. The usual response to such questions is that this entire field is still in its infancy, so to speak, and clearer guidelines are yet to be developed. But the California woman's act of love for her father would no doubt meet with overwhelming support on the Phil Donahue show and similar popular seminars in contemporary ethics.

To more thoughtful students of these matters, the use of dead fetuses leads to some surprising

confusions. Britain's Warnock Committee, for example, recommends that there be a 14-day-cutoff rule for experimentation on embryos that are fertilized in the laboratory. Charles Krauthammer, writing in the *New Republic*, basically agrees, while acknowledging that the 14-day rule may prepare society for 14 weeks or 40 weeks. "Does any such rule not place us on a slippery slope?" he asks. "The answer is that society already lives there. In fact, it has slid far beyond the 14-day period. In most English-speaking jurisdictions, one can do with an aborted fetus that is many weeks old pretty much what one wants: discard, research, implant. The 14-day rule moves us further up the slope from where we are today." Krauthammer is surely right about the slippery slope.*

The oddity of the Warnock recommendation, however, is that its concern for the dignity of human life results in greater respect being shown for those who are fertilized *in vitro* (in the laboratory dish) than for those fertilized *in vivo* (in the body). Krauthammer suggests, delicately, that we cannot think clearly about the new questions related to the production and exploitation of human life without rethinking the old question of abortion. Because they view the abortion debate as wearied and wearying, as polarized and stalemated, many will resist that suggestion.

IN ANY EVENT, it can be argued that the eugenics project—in both what is proposed and what is already being done—has moved beyond disputes about life before birth, or about life that was never intended to be born. Once again society has passed that point. The new and more "interesting" questions have to do with the termination and medical exploitation of human beings already born. In September 1987, the *Newsweek* story was titled "Should Medicine Use the Unborn?" Having answered that question affirmatively, in December, three months later, the question agitating the media was "Should Medicine Use the Born?" The opening wedge to this new phase was the debate over what might be done with anencephalic newborns (babies born with most of their brains missing).

As with almost all the questions considered here, New Jersey is vying, successfully, for the honor of being in the legal vanguard. Assembly Bill 3367 would permit parents to donate the organs of an anencephalic child. At present, they have to wait for the child to die first. The new law removes that technicality by declaring the baby dead before it dies. In California, however—confident that the law would quickly catch up

* I am sometimes asked whether I "believe in" the slippery slope, as though it requires an act of faith. I believe in the slippery slope the same way I believe in the Hudson River. It's there. There is no better metaphor to describe those cultural and technological skid marks which are evident to all who have eyes to see.

with practice, and ethics with the law—they did not wait for a change in law.

Loma Linda University Medical Center is connected with the Seventh Day Adventists, a highly moral, even moralistic, religious group that insists on abstinence from alcohol, tobacco, and—although not universally—tea and coffee. Everything done at the medical center is subjected to the strictest ethical scrutiny. The center, like hospitals most everywhere these days, has a highly qualified ethics committee. Indeed it has been observed, correctly, that in the last two decades medical technology has been the salvation of ethics as a profession. Thousands of medical ethicists and bioethicists, as they are called, professionally guide the unthinkable on its passage through the debatable on its way to becoming the justifiable until it is finally established as the unexceptionable. Those who pause too long to ponder troubling questions along the way are likely to be told that “the profession has already passed that point.” In truth, the profession is usually huffing and puffing to catch up with what is already being done without its moral blessing.

THE star of Loma Linda is a surgeon named Leonard Bailey. On October 16, 1987, Dr. Bailey led a team that transplanted a heart from an anencephalic infant into another baby delivered by Caesarean section three hours earlier. A statement from Loma Linda notes that the procedure was “innovative medically” and also “interesting ethically” because it “prompted further discussions regarding the moral wisdom of using brain dead or non-brain dead anencephalic human neonates as organ donors.” (Neonate is the term for children less than a month old.) The girl baby who “donated” her organs was, interestingly enough, named Gabrielle, the feminine of Gabriel, the archangel who reveals the things to come.

There are about 3,500 anencephalic children born each year in this country, and most of them die within a month. The problem is that their organs deteriorate and are not much good for transplanting if you wait until they die. Loma Linda recommends to parents that the children be allowed to live for no more than a week before taking the parts. The parents, we are told, find this procedure “deeply meaningful,” since their disappointment in having a handicapped baby is “redeemed” by putting the baby to good use in “helping others.” The language of redemptive suffering is very prominent in the discussion of these matters. The sorrow of being afflicted with handicapped children or older people with severe disabilities, we are informed, is significantly assuaged by “donating” them for altruistic purposes.

Dr. Jacquelyn Bamman, a neonatologist, is among those who are troubled about what is now being done and proposed, well knowing that today’s somewhat speculative proposal may be next

week’s *fait accompli*. Dr. Bamman worries about the clear departure from traditional medical ethics by doing surgery that is not intended to benefit the child, and indeed is directly aimed at causing the death of the child by removing the heart. She notes “the lack of any rational way to prevent the extension of this same approach to involve other children with serious defects.” If the prospect of a limited lifespan justifies the killing of children in order to use their organs, the issue goes far beyond the anencephalic to include children with Tay-Sachs, Werdnig-Hoffman, and other diseases. It might be argued that in these cases, unlike the anencephalic, there would be “benefit” to the children since it would relieve them of pain (it being assumed, although no one can know for sure, that the anencephalic feel no pain). If all whose brains are severely abnormal are potential “donors,” Dr. Bamman observes, the field is opened to infants with hydranencephaly, grade IV intracranial hemorrhage, Trisomy 13 and 18, and a host of other handicaps.

Responding to Dr. Bamman on behalf of the Loma Linda ethics committee, Dr. O. Ward Swarner acknowledges that she has indeed raised some interesting questions. He assures her that at the present time “there are no intentions or justifications for putting some in jeopardy to harvest organs for others.” At the same time, the ethics committee is in constant “consultation with other concerned staff members, nurses, social workers, ministers, and ethicists” and will “follow with interest” the work of other experts in this rapidly developing field. Dr. Swarner firmly states that “the ethics committee has not approved any harvesting of organs or procurement of transplants in any other than brain-dead patients.”

But, of course, tomorrow is another day. Speaking of a mother who agreed to have her baby’s organs harvested for others, Dr. Joyce Peabody, chief of neonatology at Loma Linda, said, “She has made a major contribution by getting us brave enough to face this issue head on.” We can be confident that the brave surgeons and ethicists of Loma Linda will not flinch in the face of the next “technological breakthrough.” Nor is it likely that other institutions will long allow the stars of a few institutions such as Loma Linda to dominate the firmament of the bright new world now in sight.

To be sure, there are those who warn against the seductive appearance of the brave and the bright. The late Paul Ramsey is sometimes called the father of contemporary medical ethics, and he had reason to rue much of what he helped to wreak. Testifying before a government committee on medical ethics three years ago, Ramsey said, “I respectfully express the hope that the committee will be initially prepared to say ‘Never’ to a number of things that are now being done or proposed and that are now proximately possible to be done, and not merely to things

that may be only remotely possible. Remote possibilities are soon proximate, and soon done."

But what about just saying no? It is possible to say it, but much more difficult to make it stick. Even a good reason for saying no makes little impression in a culture that has lost any shared understanding of the good. Pitted against every no is the logic of progress, the ambition of pioneers, and, not to put too fine a point on it, the lust for fame and fortune. Even those who have the nerve to say no almost never say never. Then too, and also hard to resist, is the impulse of compassion—to relieve the suffering of "meaningless" human lives, to contribute to the health and happiness of others.

Actually, organ transplants involving infants are still highly experimental. As of this writing, there have been only nine heart transplants involving newborns, four kidney transplants, and no liver transplants. But technology proceeds apace, and those who say no—never mind never—are politely but firmly informed that medical practice has already passed that point. And, of course, we are not talking only about infants, although for some reason "breakthroughs" in what we give ourselves permission to do to people usually begin with little people, and with the old or very sick.

THERE is, at all stages of life, an obvious connection between the harvesting of healthy organs and the decision about when someone is dead, or should die. The question of euthanasia is thus an integral part of the progress of the eugenics project.

Of course the dispute over the merits and demerits of euthanasia has been with us for a very long time, going back to the Greeks and Romans, long before people attributed their decisions to the force of technological breakthroughs. But today the discussion is taking interesting turns.

The Dutch, it is generally acknowledged, are a very progressive people. That country's program of voluntary euthanasia, which is said to account for up to 8,000 deaths per year, has recently received a great deal of attention in the American media. In the last year several television programs have dramatically contrasted American practice with the more advanced and humane approach of the Dutch. A report in the *Wall Street Journal* declares, "The Netherlands is pioneering in an area that in the coming decade is likely to be a focus of medical, legal, ethical—and intensely emotional—debate in many industrialized countries." A spokesman for the Royal Dutch Medical Association explains, "What we are seeing now is the result of processes and technology that keep people alive too long, people who are suffering, people you cannot help in any real way." Daniel Callahan of the Hastings Center has made an intriguing contribution to our language by describing such people as the "biologically tenacious."

Not everyone, it should be noted, is enamored of the Dutch program. For instance, Dr. Richard Fenigsen of the Willem-Alexander Hospital in the Netherlands cites a number of studies indicating that one problem with the voluntary-euthanasia program is that it is frequently not voluntary. At some of the major hospitals, general practitioners seeking to admit elderly patients are advised to administer lethal injections instead. Involuntary active euthanasia (direct intervention to terminate a patient's life without the patient's permission) has not yet been incorporated into law, but there is great judicial leniency. For example, a doctor suspected of killing twenty residents of a senior-citizens' home pleaded guilty to killing five, was convicted of killing three, and was given a fine.

As might be expected, these developments both reflect and effect changes in popular attitudes. In a recent Dutch opinion poll, 43 percent of the respondents favored involuntary euthanasia for "unconscious persons with little chance of recovery." On another question, 33 percent had "much understanding" and 44 percent had "some understanding" for those who, out of mercy, kill their parents without their consent. Seventeen percent thought it "probable" that they would ask for involuntary active euthanasia for a demented relative.

The synod of the Reformed Church in Holland, desiring to offer moral guidance on coming to terms with the modern world, is perceived to be quite favorable in its attitude toward involuntary active euthanasia. Dutch of less advanced opinion, on the other hand, claim to have noticed a striking upsurge in the suspicion expressed by the elderly and sick toward doctors, hospitals, and their own families. (A Gallup poll reports that four times as many Americans would donate a relative's organs as would donate their own. "Trust is at issue here," commented Arthur Harrell of the American Council on Transplantation. "Some people are concerned that doctors will prematurely declare them brain-dead. Obviously, we try to allay that fear." Obviously.)

On the Dutch situation, a historical footnote is of interest. The general humanity, indeed heroism, of the Dutch during World War II was made famous by the story of Anne Frank. Less well known is the story of the Dutch medical profession. When in 1941 Artur Seyss-Inquart, the Reich Commissar for the Netherlands, ordered physicians to cooperate by, for instance, concentrating their efforts on rehabilitating people who could be made fit for labor, the doctors of Holland unanimously refused. Seyss-Inquart then threatened to take away their medical licenses unless they cooperated at least to the extent of giving information about their patients to the Occupation authorities. Unanimously, the doctors of Holland responded by handing in their licenses, taking down their shingles, and seeing their patients secretly. They declared that they would not

compromise their medical oath, which pledged them to work, solely and always, for the welfare of their patients. Seyss-Inquart persuaded and cajoled, and then he made an example of a hundred doctors whom he arrested and sent to the concentration camps. But all to no avail. The medical profession of Holland remained adamant. The doctors quietly took care of the widows and orphans of their condemned colleagues, but they would not give in. And so we are told that during the entire Occupation not one of the heroic doctors of Holland cooperated in the Nazi programs of slave labor, euthanasia, eugenic experimentation, and nontherapeutic sterilization.

But all that was a long time ago, and the Dutch doctors of today have so far forgotten it that the Committee on Medical Ethics of the European Community, in unanimously rejecting the proposals of the Dutch medical society on euthanasia, has expressed "hope that this strong reaction will induce [our] Dutch colleagues to reconsider their move and return to the happy communion of utmost respect for human life."

If the Dutch are being urged to return from the abyss, in this country the forward stampede gains momentum, it seems, almost day by day. This spring voters in California may have the opportunity to vote in a referendum being pushed by Americans Against Human Suffering, the political arm of the Hemlock Society, which has been around for some years and claims 26,000 members in 26 chapters nationwide. The Hemlock Society's motto is "Good Life, Good Death," and the referendum is promoted under the banner of the "right to die." "We need a public debate on acts of euthanasia, and California has the best track record in the nation for taking unprecedented action," says Derek Humphrey, founder of the Hemlock Society. (Mr. Humphrey has written a much acclaimed book on how he provided lethal drugs for his first wife to commit suicide when she had bone cancer.) It is confidently predicted that, even if this referendum fails in California, it will "raise the consciousness" of the nation and open the way to other initiatives.

The referendum, which would legalize active euthanasia and "assisted suicide," is strongly opposed by the California Medical Association. "The public should realize that what we are talking about here is killing people," says Catherine Hanson, the association's legal counsel. "It is absolutely contrary to the entire medical ethic." Proponents of the referendum counter that, in the light of recent developments, such a statement of absolutes is obsolete. They may well be right.

CERTAINLY there has been in the last several years a rash of books, articles, and television programs promoting the "right to die" and, although it is usually not put this way, the permission, even the obligation, to kill. In such advocacy, the linkage is commonly made

among abortion, fetal experimentation and exploitation, infanticide, and suicide. The basic argument advanced is the need for rational and scientific control over the untidiness of the human condition.

Among the prominent writers in this campaign are Jeffrey Lyon, Earl Shelp, Peter Singer, Helga Kuhse, and Robert Weir. Singer, for example, has famously argued that your average pig has more consciousness and therefore more right to protection than fetuses or human beings suffering from severe disabilities. (Other animal-rights advocates have exhibited some ambivalence toward this line of argument, knowing that it is human beings, not pigs, that they need to persuade of the rightness of their cause.) In the eugenics literature dealing with issues such as infanticide and suicide, champions of progress typically inveigh against the baneful influence of Christianity in perpetuating irrational "taboos." This would seem to neglect both the proscriptions against homicide in the Jewish tradition and the wondrous flexibility demonstrated by many Christians in accommodating what are thought to be the imperatives of the modern world.

The current eugenics literature is admirably candid about the radicality of what is being proposed. Shelp, for instance, declares that "it is proper to treat unequals unequally," and warns against "a tyranny of the dependent in which the production of able persons is consumed by the almost limitless needs of dependent beings." Lyon recognizes that many severely handicapped people succeed in living happy, productive, and even inspirational lives. But such people are aberrations ("dynamic, overachieving supercripples") and should not be permitted to distract our attention from the need for a rational public policy that must, perforce, deal with the generality.

In his very useful study, *The Nazi Doctors*, Robert Jay Lifton details the progress of the "medicalization of killing" under the Third Reich. The concept of *lebensunwertes Leben* ("life not worthy of life") was used to cut a wide swath, including the unfit newborn, the mentally ill, the gravely handicapped, the useless aged, and, of course, several races that fell into the category of the "subhuman." It must be acknowledged that, except for tracts issued from the fever swamps surrounding the eugenics project, few people today include a racial factor in calculations of who does and who does not have sufficient "quality of life" to continue living. Here the inhibition against racial discrimination seems to be one "taboo" still firmly in place.

It must be further acknowledged that in the literature there is considerably more moral agonizing about ending the lives of people who have previously been recognized as rational and productive citizens. But in the cases of unfit newborns and human life that is "incapable of full social participation," the decision to terminate is

relatively uncomplicated. A rational quality-of-life measurement makes it clear that their lives are not a good for them. Thus the Nobel Prize-winners Francis Crick and James Watson, co-discoverers of the structure of DNA, think that newborn infants should be subjected to rigorous examination and should be permitted to live only if they are found fit. Many who find the proposal repugnant are sure that there is a convincing argument against it, but it does not come readily to mind.

Critics contend, however, that the question of whether life is a good *for* the person gets things backward. The argument of the critics is that life is a good *of* the person, and that depriving the innocent of such life is tantamount to homicide. In current debates that argument is widely dismissed as "vitalism," which presumably depends upon a metaphysical belief regarding the status of life rather than a rational judgment regarding the quality of the life actually being lived. Admittedly and inevitably, in all cases somebody is making a decision. Such decisions become especially tricky in the instances of involuntary euthanasia or "assisted suicide."

Despite the avid promotion of death with dignity, living wills, and related ideas, the vast majority of people do not, for whatever reason, clearly indicate in advance the circumstances in which they wish to be killed. This results in numerous instances, especially with respect to the biologically tenacious aged, of "subhuman life" being a heavy burden upon family and the medical staff. At this point the assistance offered in assisted suicide must be generously defined, including the decision to make a decision for people who cannot decide. Ethics committees around the country have helpfully developed quality-of-life indexes by which it is possible to make a "best-interest" judgment, also called a "reasonable-person" judgment. That is to say, others decide to terminate a patient's life on the basis of what it is assumed the patient would decide were he a reasonable person acting in his own best interest.

This form of "substituted judgment" has led to concepts such as surrogate suicide or substitute suicide, although of course it is always the other person who dies. Perhaps not surprisingly, when the questions are posed in these ways it is usually decided on behalf of the other party that he or she would decide to stop being a burden to the people who are actually making the decision.

IN CURRENT practice and discussion, there is not yet a consensus in favor of active euthanasia by administering a lethal dosage or otherwise actually killing the person. A consensus is rapidly forming, however, on withholding food and hydration in order to "facilitate the dying process." This consensus requires the erasure of two distinctions of long standing in medical ethics

and practice. The first distinction is between "ordinary" and "extraordinary" means of treatment. It is now widely, although by no means unanimously, agreed that, in the case of certain classes of patients, all treatment is extraordinary, and therefore not required and perhaps not ethically permitted.

The second distinction is between medical treatment and providing food and water. It used to be thought that providing food and water, also intravenously, is a matter of ordinary obligation. The argument is now on the ascendancy, however, that providing food and water constitutes medical treatment. And, again, in specified cases any medical treatment falls into the category of "extraordinary means" which are neither required nor to be countenanced. With the withdrawing of food and water the decision has been made to intervene actively with the clear and sole intent of hastening death. That is to say, the decision has been made for euthanasia or mercy killing. The only question now is how death is to be effected. Starvation is a very clumsy means. The person may live for days, there is often frightful physical disfigurement, and there is the unknown factor of prolonged pain. The attractiveness of starvation to the morally queasy is that it is the "least direct" means of hastening death.

But once we have grown more comfortable with the euthanasia decision that has been made, it seems almost certain that medical practice will adopt means that are more efficient and less aesthetically disturbing. Starvation must thus be seen as a provisional technique to be employed only until medical practice and public opinion are prepared for more rational measures.

It should not be thought that these developments have to do only with the comatose, the "biologically tenacious" drug-sated aged, or others in imminent danger of dying. Those are of course the cases highlighted by euthanasia enthusiasts, for such cases lend themselves to emotionally powerful statements about needlessly prolonging "meaningless" human life, and about the burden that such life is to others. Traditional medical ethics has long allowed the removal of means of sustenance from those near death if the means are counterproductive or ineffectual. In other words, if the feeding instrument is causing other severe disabilities, or the body is not able to assimilate the food, or the person is within hours of dying no matter what is done, intravenous feeding should be discontinued. But what is now being proposed and what is now being done goes much further, including direct intervention to terminate broad categories of people suffering from quality-of-life deficiencies.

The new approach received intense national attention a few years ago in the Baby Doe case in Indiana. There a court allowed parents to starve to death their handicapped baby, even though dozens of couples volunteered to adopt the child.

Since then there have been well-publicized cases of adults injured in accidents or suffering from crippling diseases who have been starved to death, although they gave no indication that they wished to die and, at least according to some observers, indicated a will to live. Many questions, of course, have been raised about such cases, most of which are addressed by a recent report from the Hastings Center, "Guidelines on the Termination of Life-Sustaining Treatment and the Care of the Dying."

The panel that issued this report in September 1987 proposes very broad categories of people for whom medical treatment, including the supply of food and water, might be terminated. One category, for instance, is "the patient who has an illness or disabling condition that is severe and irreversible." That would seem to offer distinct possibilities for reducing the population of nursing homes, mental institutions, and a good many hospital wards, thus dramatically relieving pressure on scarce medical resources. The panel focuses on people in such categories who "lack decision-making capacity" with respect to whether they wish to live. In these cases a substituted judgment is required and the "reasonable-person" standard should be applied. The standard is put this way: "Would a reasonable person in the patient's circumstances probably prefer the termination of treatment because the patient's life is largely devoid of opportunities to achieve satisfaction, or full of pain or suffering with no corresponding benefits?" The panel wants it understood that it is being cautious and is sensitive to possible "abuses" of the approach it recommends. Substituted judgments should be carefully reviewed by several parties, including doctors and ethics committees. After listing the several categories of people who are candidates for termination, the report states, "*The above list in no way suggests that treatment should be forgone just because a person falls into one of these categories; nor does it mean that treatment may not be terminated for other patients.*" The latter statement, one notes, sharply qualifies and may in some instances nullify the former, despite the former's being italicized. (Treatment, keep in mind, includes supplying food and water.)

Much depends on what is meant by the person's "capacity" to make a decision about whether he wishes to die. "These guidelines define decision-making capacity as: (a) the ability to comprehend information relevant to the decision; (b) the ability to deliberate about the choices in accordance with personal values and goals; and (c) the ability to communicate (verbally or nonverbally) with caregivers."

Any experienced medical "caregiver" will recognize that this constitutes a pretty tall order for many patients. For example, deliberating about choices in accordance with personal values and goals is difficult for many people under the best of circumstances. Yet the panel urges "respect for

the patient as a self-determining individual" and cautions against "wresting control from the patient with decision-making capacity." Capacity, we are told, should not be confused with competence, which is a legal term. "A person can be legally competent and nonetheless lack the capacity to make a particular treatment decision." Capacity turns out to be a marvelously plastic measure. "Capacity is not an all-or-nothing matter; there is a spectrum of abilities, and capacity can fluctuate over time and in different circumstances." For instance, "Extreme instability of preference may itself be a form of decision-making incapacity." The patient who yesterday wanted to die and today just as intensely wants to live clearly does not have the capacity to understand what is in his best interest.

THE Hastings Center guidelines, which emerged from a project involving twenty experts over two-and-a-half years, have been widely hailed. The *New York Times* reported that "experts say no such comprehensive guidelines have been developed before," and the study "breaks important ground." A closer look at the panel, however, indicates that the document, contra its publicity, may not reflect such an impressive consensus among experts.

Five of the twenty members of the project, including director Daniel Callahan, are from the staff of the Hastings Center. Of the remainder, there is a strong representation of people interested in medical malpractice law and of others involved in the administration of nursing homes. Without impugning motives, it might be suggested that such people have a vested interest in more relaxed rules for the treatment of people who lack "decision-making capacity."

In addition, two members of the panel who are ethicists issued substantive written dissents. Leslie Steven Rotenberg of Los Angeles, who has also publicly challenged the Loma Linda proceedings discussed earlier, is quite forthright: "I fear these guidelines, if widely endorsed, may be used to give a moral 'imprimatur' to undertreating or failing to treat persons with disabilities, unconscious persons for whom accurate prognoses are not yet obtainable, elderly patients with severe dementia, and others whose treatment is not believed (to use the language of the report) 'costworthy.'"

Despite all this, the Hastings Center report is celebrated as a landmark document by proponents of the eugenics project, and is now being invoked in public debates, court cases, and state legislatures around the country.

The director of the Hastings Center, Daniel Callahan, is frequently described as the most widely respected authority on medical ethics in America. Be that as it may, he has certainly been at the center of these discussions for almost twenty years and has recently stirred a lively discussion with his book *Setting Limits: Medical Goals in an Aging*

Society.^{*} Callahan urges us yet once more to brace ourselves for the thinking of the unthinkable. The basic proposal is that there should be an age limit, perhaps eighty-five, beyond which there will be no government funding for life-extending medical care. Because Callahan is a decent and intelligent man, the proposal is almost painfully nuanced and surrounded by myriad qualifications. Indeed, his is a deeply conflicted and often confused argument. Thus, he offers extensive data indicating that America simply cannot afford quality medical care for a rapidly aging population but, at the same time, he insists that his proposal should not be adopted for purely fiscal reasons. Again, he repeatedly says that his proposal would be "dangerous" and "morally mischievous" without major changes in cultural attitudes toward aging and death, and such changes, he says, may take generations. Yet he persists in making his proposal now.

SOME of the changes advocated by Callahan are surely to be welcomed. Drawing on the work of Leon Kass of the University of Chicago, he urges our accepting the idea that there is such a thing as "a natural life span." In this respect Callahan sets himself against the eugenics project with its delusory dream of immortality through technological control. Yet he simultaneously subscribes to a quality-of-life index by which "natural" limits, such as severe disability, are not accepted but taken to be signs of a life not worth living. Callahan is well aware of the Nazi doctrine of *lebensunwertes Leben* and notes that, in the light of the Nazi experience, "there has been a justifiable reluctance to exclude borderline cases from the human community." That reluctance can be overcome, however, if we keep it firmly in mind that the Nazis "spoke all too readily of 'a life not worth living,'" and if we ourselves are very careful when we speak the same way.

Callahan clearly wants to distance himself from the proponents of euthanasia, assisted suicide, and other such measures. But he also argues that "artificial" feeding is a medical treatment and should be discontinued in the case of patients suffering from severe quality-of-life deficiency. Lacking any ethical framework other than liberal individualism, Callahan stresses respect for the patient's decision, or, as it turns out, those who decide for the patient when the patient is "incapable." What it comes down to is quite bluntly stated: "At stake is how far and in what ways we are emotionally prepared to go to terminate life for the elderly."

The sentence is typical of the logic of the eugenics project and interesting in several respects. For instance, it is said that we are terminating life "for" other people, rather than terminating the life "of" other people, it being assumed by the "reasonable-person standard" that we are doing them a favor. As important, we are

told that what is at stake is what we are "emotionally prepared" to do. For many people, that is a slight barrier indeed. In this way of thinking, the accent is on freedom, voluntarism, and choice. Nobody is allowed to "impose his values" on others. You are free to decide not to terminate your elderly parent or handicapped child, but you must also agree not to interfere with my decision to "terminate life for" the incapacitated who fall within my decision-making authority. (It is worth noting that the Hastings Center guidelines do include "religious exemptions" for people who have religiously grounded inhibitions about the policies proposed.)

Daniel Callahan is a spirited opponent of the slippery-slope metaphor, insisting that one thing does not necessarily, or even probably, lead to another. But his own emotional preparedness with respect to the treatment of the dependent and incapable has undergone a remarkable development. In the October 1983 issue of the *Hastings Center Report* he wrote forcefully against withdrawing food and water. "Given the increasingly large pool of superannuated, chronically ill, physically marginal elderly, it could well become the nontreatment of choice." He added, "Because we have now become sufficiently habituated to the idea of turning off a respirator, we are psychologically prepared to go one step further." In 1983 Callahan was convinced that "the feeding of the hungry, whether because they are poor or because they are physically unable to feed themselves, is the most fundamental of all human relationships. It is the perfect symbol of the fact that human life is inescapably social and communal. We cannot live at all unless others are prepared to give us food and water when we need them. . . . It is a most dangerous business to tamper with, or adulterate, so enduring and central a moral emotion." Four years later Callahan invites us, not to tamper with or adulterate, but to discard that moral emotion. It is, after all, but an emotion. One may perhaps be forgiven for thinking that Callahan dramatically illustrates the slippery slope that he so vigorously denies.

To be sure, there is nothing wrong with changing one's mind, and people like Daniel Callahan may simply say that they have thought things through more carefully. As he himself suggests, however, this is not a matter of thinking one's way through but of feeling one's way through. We need no longer think about the unthinkable when, in time, it has become emotionally tolerable, even banal. A useful term in this connection is *primiticide*, the first murder. When it is first suggested that we do a murderous deed, we may respond, "But that would be murder!" After we have done it once, or maybe twice, that response loses something of its force of conviction. As a barrier to evil, novelty is a one-time thing; it

^{*} Simon & Schuster, 256 pp., \$18.95.

cannot be reinstated. In the 1930's a hit man for Murder Inc. was on trial. The prosecutor asked him how he felt when committing a murder. He in turn asked the prosecutor how he felt when he tried his first case in court, to which the prosecutor allowed that he was nervous, but he got used to it. "It's the same with murder," observed the hit man, "you get used to it."

Champions of the eugenics project are deeply and understandably offended when it is said that they are advocating murder. For some reason they do not take offense when the statement is amended to say that they are advocating what used to be called murder.

THE attempt to deny risk and suffering, the use and elimination of the unfit—these were all elements of the old eugenics. But what earlier eugenisists could only dream about can now be done; and, if it can be done, it likely will be done. In the technological possibility of creating "a new man in a new society," we have a vision that makes the similar ambition of political totalitarians seem modest by comparison.

Of course there are serious people worrying about that ominous prospect. But it seems that soaring hubris, joined to technical capacity, has broken the bonds of moral restraint. That the bonds are broken is evident enough in the very efforts designed to impose limits.

Thus not long ago textbooks in ethics used to set forth the moral principle that each person counts for one, and none counts for more or less than one. A standard illustration of the principle was the hypothetical case of a hospital with five patients, four of them persons of world-class accomplishment (a statesman, musician, mathematician, and philosopher), the fifth a mental deficient without means or kin. The fifth does, however, have the healthy organs which, if transplanted, could save the lives of the other four. The point was that it could never be right to kill the one in order to save the four, for people are always to be treated as ends and never as means. It was a venerable principle in the history of Western thought. Today the principle is becoming the hypothesis, and the illustration no longer illustrates anything but a "morally agonizing dilemma" to be gravely faced in consultation with surgeons, social workers, ministers, and ethicists.

Or consider, once again, Britain's Warnock Committee. Its chairman, Dame Mary Warnock, flatly states, "There is no such thing as a moral expert." This may suggest that, as a teacher of moral philosophy at Cambridge, Dame Mary is taking her salary under false pretenses, but that is a question for her and her conscience. More immediate to our concern is the assumption that on issues of life and of death, of birth and of the family, "everyone has a right to judge for himself." This is the perfect formula of what Alasdair MacIntyre calls

the ethics of "modern emotivism." Step by step, the committee states that, since A is allowed, there is no rational reason for disallowing B. It is, as Daniel Callahan might say, a question of emotional preparedness. Of course the committee knows that some matters of life and death must be regulated by law, but law is a weak reed in the absence of moral reasoning. As Dame Mary writes, "We were bound to have recourse to moral sentiment, to try, that is, to sort out what our feelings were, and to justify them." Most of us, it might be noted, are very good at justifying our feelings.

Studies such as that of the Warnock Committee are not done in a social vacuum. The people involved recognize that they are morally accountable to society and, we are told, "Society feels, albeit obscurely, that its members, especially the most helpless, such as children and the very old, must be protected against possible exploitation by enthusiastic scientists: and embryos are brought into the category of those deserving protection, just as animals are. This is a matter of public, and widely shared, *sentiment*" (emphasis in original). But the obscure feelings of society are marvelously malleable. So the committee states, "The question must ultimately be . . . in what sort of society can we live with our conscience clear?" That, take note, is the *ultimate* question.

Dame Mary wants it known that she is not unaware of the dangers in this line of thinking. There is, she says, "an increasing sense of urgency" that social controls "should be brought up to date, so that society may be protected from its real and very proper fear of a rudderless voyage into unknown and threatening seas."

And so, according to the Warnock Committee, we have embarked upon this parlous voyage guided by public opinion, technological innovation, and obscure moral feelings, headed toward a society in which we can live with our conscience clear. (It is worth noting that eight of the sixteen members of the committee issued dissents of varying substance. Even so, the Warnock report is hailed as a landmark by the champions of the return of eugenics.)

Of a very different order is last year's document from the Vatican, "An Instruction on Respect for Human Life in Its Origin and on the Dignity of Procreation." Insisting on the unity of the relational and procreative in human sexuality, the document condemns the new eugenics in no uncertain terms. Procedures such as those countenanced by the Warnock Committee, says the Vatican, are not acceptable. "These interventions are not to be rejected on the grounds that they are artificial" but because they violate the dignity of the human person.

Charles Krauthammer, among others, has treated the Vatican Instruction with respect, acknowledging that it is "intellectually more satisfying" than committee products such as Warnock.

But he thinks the Vatican statement is also "far less useful." He cites the injunction of the Talmud, "Make ye a fence to the law." A fence prohibits actions that, although not in themselves wrong, open the way to wrong. The problem with the Vatican statement, says Krauthammer, is that it is "a fence too far." The Vatican, he writes, "sees what hell lies at the bottom of the slippery slope, and rather than erect bulwarks, detours, and sandbags, it declares the entire mountain off-limits." For Krauthammer, "There is no way off the slope." "Better," he asserts, "to find a reasonable way to live on it."

At best, it seems, we can slow the slide to what Krauthammer calls the "hellish center" at the bottom. Reports such as that of the Warnock Committee recommend detailed ethical examination of every inch of our downward slide, and they would even put some provisional obstacles in the way, but their very logic precludes the erection of any fences at all, whether near or far. More than that, they invite the conclusion that there is no hell that the fit and the flexible could not learn to live in with a "clear conscience."

When it comes to the elimination of the unfit, Robert Destro, law professor and member of the United States Civil Rights Commission, believes there might be some safety in the legal tradition and in existing laws. "The prejudice against the disabled and those with mental disabilities," he writes in the *Journal of Contemporary Health Law and Policy*, "is a strong one, with a long and sordid history." In recent years, civil-rights law in particular has been significantly extended to include the handicapped. If courts are now to countenance discrimination against the mentally and physically handicapped by permitting guardians to starve their wards, says Destro, "they should do so directly rather than mask their decisions in high-sounding arguments claiming to rely on 'privacy' and 'self-determination.'" In cases where the ward is incompetent, Destro goes on, the only

privacy and self-determination being served are those of the guardian, not those of the ward. On a collision course with the entire history of achievements in civil rights, "the law is in the process of adopting a functional definition of the value of the human person, but it is doing so by indirection." Destro concludes: "Though it may take some time, I do believe that we will live to regret leaving to lawyers, doctors, judges, legislators, and ethicists the important task of deciding who among the disabled shall live, and who shall die. We have been down that road before."

WRITING in 1963, Mark H. Haller, a historian of the American eugenics movement, noted that since the war against the Nazis there were signs of "a renewed interest in eugenic problems, although the word eugenics has seldom been used." He cited the noted eugenicist Frederick Osborn who urged the movement to be patient, waiting for scientific knowledge, technology, and social attitudes to prepare the way for the radical changes required. Otherwise, said Osborn, the movement would make the mistakes it did in the past and would once again "turn public opinion back against eugenics."

Twenty-five years later it seems the time is right. Perhaps the law, or maybe the remembrance of horrors past, will yet fend off the return of eugenics in its fullness. Perhaps popular moral judgment, drawn from older traditions of moral truth, will, through the democratic process, begin to erect fences. Perhaps our cultural leaders will rediscover modes of moral reason that appeal to a good beyond emotion. And perhaps not.

And so, quite suddenly it seems, we are facing questions for which we have no ready answers. The questions are being answered, however. Most of us, probably because we want to live with a clear conscience, prefer not to think about the answers that are being given. Later, we can say that we did not know.

Can Israel Withdraw?

Yes: *Mitchell Bard*

No: *David Bar-Illan*

In the months since the riots first broke out in Gaza and on the West Bank, we have heard and seen a great deal about the practical, political, and moral problems that have been created for Israel by the occupation. But rarely have Israel's critics faced the issue of alternatives. Or, rather, what is increasingly coming to seem the alternative: Israeli withdrawal from the territories followed by the setting up of a new Palestinian state which would almost certainly be ruled by the PLO. For as time goes by it seems ever more likely that the "Jordanian option" and the Camp David formula are either unworkable or are temporary stages on the road to such a state.

This new Palestinian state could come into being through unilateral withdrawal by Israel, or through negotiations. But whatever the process leading up to it, the great question is what would happen once it were established. Would there be peace? Would there be more terrorism? Would there be another war? Would Israel be more secure, or would it be more vulnerable to attack and even destruction?

The first of the two articles below presents a best-case answer; the second, a worst-case scenario. It will be for the Israelis, whose lives are literally at stake here, to decide which may be the more plausible.

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Mitchell Bard: The riots in Gaza and other areas occupied by Israel have refocused attention on the immediacy of what is generally referred to as the "Palestinian problem." The riots should have made it clear, however, that the problem is really not so much a Palestinian or Arab one as it is an Israeli one. The Israelis, moreover, are in a position to accept the responsibility for solving this problem, because, contrary to conventional wisdom, it is in their power to do so without sacrificing legitimate security concerns.

Defenders of Israel may immediately respond to such a suggestion with a litany of familiar, and true, historical facts. The Jewish people have a biblical claim to the land. Jews lived on the land uninterrupted for centuries. There has never been a Palestinian state. In the decades before the establishment of Israel in 1948 the Arabs violently opposed Jewish settlement while at the same time selling the land which made settlement possible. The Arabs rejected the 1947 UN partition scheme

and attempted to drive the Jews of Palestine into the sea. In the ensuing 1948-49 war for Israel's independence, more than half-a-million Palestinian Arabs became refugees, as did a similar number of Jews from Arab lands. The Palestinians are virtually the only refugees in the world who have not been resettled; they could have been resettled at any time, if the Arab states had the slightest interest in ameliorating their plight. During the nineteen years of Jordanian rule over the West Bank (1948-67), no one called for a Palestinian state despite the fact that Jordan had no legal claim to the land. If King Hussein of Jordan had heeded Israel's warning in June 1967 not to join in the general Arab assault, Israel would not be occupying the West Bank today. That occupation has been the most enlightened in history. No Arab leader except Anwar Sadat has been prepared to negotiate peace with Israel.

Given such historical facts, why should responsibility nevertheless rest with Israel? To answer

that question, one first has to ask a series of other questions:

How long can Israel expect to control a population of over one million hostile Arabs?

What happens when the Arabs in Israel and the occupied territories outnumber the Jews, as demographers predict will occur in the not-too-distant future?

How long can Israel resist the pressure of international opinion opposing its actions?

How long will it be before the United States begins to use aid and arms as a lever to force Israeli concessions?

How long can Israel expect its own Arab citizens to remain loyal if it continues to repress Palestinians?

How long will it take before the numbers of young Israelis refusing to serve in the occupied territories become large enough to represent a threat to the integrity of the military?

How long can Israelis go on carrying out the distasteful and sometimes abhorrent tasks required for continued occupation before the democratic and Jewish values they cherish are destroyed?

It is certainly true that Israel did not ask for the problems with which it is faced; they were forced upon the Jewish state by its hostile neighbors. But this does not make the problems go away. In the end there is nothing Israel can do to eliminate Arab hostility, just as there is nothing Jews can do to eradicate anti-Semitism. There is something Israel can do, however, to rid itself of the cancer eating away at the Zionist soul.

ISRAEL is usually said to have three options which are so familiar that one need mention them only briefly. Israel can annex the territories. It can maintain the status quo. Or it can negotiate a settlement with Jordan and the Palestinians that will include territorial compromises.

First, annexation. There is no question that Israel has a legitimate historical claim to Judea, Samaria, and Gaza. But annexation would require the integration of over one million Palestinians into Israeli society. If these Arabs become full citizens, Israel will cease to be a Jewish state. If, as the far Right proposes, they are denied voting rights, Israel will cease to be a democracy.

A position once confined to the fringe represented by Meir Kahane has recently been voiced by more mainstream Israeli politicians: the Arabs should be expelled, or, as it is euphemistically put, transferred. I have never heard the proponents of this solution face two critical issues: Would the Arabs willingly board deportation trains and buses? Would Jews be prepared to carry out the deportation orders?

Even if we ignore the moral issues raised by such a policy, how would Israel go about removing one million people from their homes? And what would the United States do?

The second option is to maintain the status quo. But the self-evident answers to the series of questions I posed above make it clear that the status quo is intolerable. Even if Israel were able to control indefinitely a hostile Palestinian population, the need to patrol Arab cities, impose curfews on areas under military administration, chase Palestinian schoolchildren throwing rocks, and shoot demonstrators would cause immeasurable damage to the Israelis themselves. As one Israeli remarked about his government's policy of "force, power, and beatings" in the territories, "Whom do the blows hurt more—the young Arabs hit or the young soldiers doing the hitting? The blows of those hit will go away in a few days. I don't know if the blows to the heart of those who do the hitting will ever go away."

Indeed, it is because Israel recognizes that the situation is intolerable that it continues to pursue the third option, the effort to engage in negotiations with King Hussein or any other Arab leader willing to recognize Israel's right to exist. Israel has always been prepared to make concessions for peace, but has been unable to find a partner other than Anwar Sadat.

As for Hussein, as much as he might like to regain the West Bank—his sovereignty over this territory, incidentally, has never been acknowledged by the other Arab states—doing so would most likely cause him more trouble than it would be worth. For *he* would then have the burden of dealing with the "Palestinian problem." Moreover, by adding over one million Palestinians, most of whom despise him, to the nearly two million Palestinians who now make up the majority of Jordan's population, Hussein would endanger his own regime.

Because they have no partners for peace negotiations, many Israelis have argued that there is nothing they can do but wait. This, however, is not correct. Israel can take unilateral action—specifically, it can decide to withdraw from the territories almost overnight. Such a decision would give Israel total control over the outcome. There would be no need to compromise, no threat of coercion from outside powers, no reliance on American or international guarantees, no ambiguities.

A NUMBER of objections may immediately be raised to such a suggestion, and I will address them in turn.

Israel would be giving up something for nothing. The goal of diplomatic negotiations of the kind favored by successive Israeli governments is not only to arrive at a satisfactory disposition of the territories but to bring about a normalization of relations between Israel and its neighbors. By acting unilaterally—it might be argued—Israel would sacrifice its one bargaining chip for inducing the Arabs to make peace.

In truth, however, the only Arab leader directly affected would be King Hussein and, though Israel might prefer to have a settlement with Jordan codified in a peace treaty, there is already a de-facto peace agreement between Jordan and Israel. Moreover, once Israel withdrew from "occupied Arab land," those other Arab states that have no territorial dispute with Israel would no longer be able to justify their belligerence. In reality, one knows that Arab hostility, based as it is not on Israel's occupation but on its very existence, would not abate. With regard to the Arab states, then, nothing would be lost or gained.

But it is inaccurate to say that Israel would receive nothing by giving up the territories. Israel would be ridding itself of the need to rule over another people, with all the degenerative effects that such a policy entails.

The territories are part of biblical Israel. They are, indeed—but that does not mean the Israeli government has to exercise its claim to the land. The territory will still be biblical Israel, only under the control of another power, just as it has been for centuries. The boundaries of nations often shift according to the exigencies of security, politics, war, or economics. The Zionists were willing to accept the first partition of Palestine—that is, the creation of Trans-Jordan in 1922—because they recognized that their own interests were also served by this arrangement. In 1947, the Zionists were even willing to accept the internationalization of Jerusalem in order to secure support for the second partition of Palestine—the one that established the Jewish state. By giving up the territories, Israel would in that sense be returning to borders (with modifications to be discussed below) that Zionist leaders previously accepted.

Israel's security would be endangered. On the contrary: by acting unilaterally, Israel could establish what its leaders considered secure, defensible borders; it is doubtful that those same borders could be won through negotiations. Worth bearing in mind in addition is that Israel was able to survive during the nineteen years that Jordan controlled the West Bank. This is not to say there would be no danger, but Israel would remain strong enough to counter any threat.

If Israel withdrew, the territories would become an irredentist Palestinian state controlled by the PLO. This is probably the most serious and often-heard objection to withdrawal. It is, indeed, very possible that a Palestinian state would emerge in the relinquished territories, but such an outcome would not necessarily be so threatening as is generally thought.

Let me emphasize at the outset that I have no illusions about the PLO. Its objective is to "liberate" all of Palestine, and its policy of destroying Israel in stages would not suddenly be abandoned

after the establishment of a state on the West Bank and Gaza Strip. A number of factors, however, would minimize this threat.

For years the Israelis have been saying that the PLO does not really represent the Palestinians in the occupied territories. If this is true, then it is at least possible that the future leaders of a Palestinian state would not be members of the PLO. There is no question that many West Bank Palestinians see the PLO as outsiders who have accomplished nothing while they have remained in Palestine fighting the Israelis every day. The Palestinians in the territories—that is, the ones who would immediately benefit from an Israeli withdrawal—should also be reluctant to endanger their new-found freedom by permitting the PLO to carry on its armed struggle. They might thus act as a deterrent to the PLO strategy of "liberating" Palestine in stages.

But what if I am wrong and the "moderates" were unable to restrain the radicals? This is a possibility, but it need not be considered an unmanageable threat to Israeli security. It is true that the state's pre-1967 borders were dangerously narrow, and it is also true that many infiltrators succeeded in committing terrorist atrocities in Israel. But this time around there would be several differences.

First, the borders need not be the same as the 1949 armistice lines; they would be the "secure, defensible borders" advocated by every Israeli leader for the past two decades.

Secondly, in 1967 Israel, attacked on three fronts, nevertheless scored a resounding victory that humiliated the Arabs; today, Israel is at peace with its most formidable adversary, Egypt, and enjoys a de-facto peace on two of its three other frontiers. Hussein learned his lesson in 1967; not only did he refrain from joining the 1973 Yom Kippur War, but since losing the West Bank he has effectively accepted the fact of Israel. To the north, Israel controls a "security zone" in Lebanon, thereby ensuring relative tranquility on that border. Only Syria remains a belligerent neighbor, but Hafez Assad's forces are bogged down in Lebanon and are otherwise inferior to the Israel Defense Forces (though Assad has made no secret of his desire to achieve military parity).

Thirdly, Israel is many times more powerful in 1988 than it was in 1967. The United States, a friend twenty years ago, is today an ally. If American policy was once aimed at maintaining a military balance in the Middle East, today it is aimed at guaranteeing Israel's military superiority. The PLO was no match for the IDF in Lebanon in 1982, and would remain no match in a Palestinian state.

The economic ties between the territories and Israel would also minimize the danger. Over 70,000 Palestinians now work in Israel, representing more than one-third the labor force in the territories and a contribution of approximately

one-sixth the areas' GNP. If there were a large immigration of Palestinians to the new state the internal job market would shrink, and those with jobs in Israel would therefore be more committed than ever to maintaining good relations with Israel—especially since the threat of closing the borders would give Israel the means to strangle the new state economically.

If sealing the borders would be Israel's stick, the carrot would be financial aid to help minimize disruptions in the area after withdrawal. The Arab world, in the meantime, would once again have an opportunity to prove by its assistance to the new state that it is really concerned with the Palestinians as people rather than as pawns in the conflict with Israel.

Both Jordan and Syria would also have an interest in constraining Palestinian radicalism. Syria has proved in Lebanon its readiness to take action against the Palestinians when they threaten Syrian interests. King Hussein learned first-hand in 1970 the threat posed by the PLO to his regime, and would be particularly wary of expansionist tendencies. Thus, even an irredentist PLO state would be squeezed on each of its borders by superior military forces.

A Palestinian state would be able to build an army and import arms that would threaten Israel. Israel would have to make it clear that it would not tolerate the introduction of large amounts of arms into the territories, and that massive retaliation would follow if this warning were ignored. Since the Palestinians are already familiar with Israel's willingness to retaliate with force, presumably they would avoid provocation.

Critics may point out that the PLO would now be closer to Israel's population centers. But that means Israel's army would also be closer to the PLO. Moreover, the Israelis would now know exactly where the terrorists were. At worst, Israel would have to retake the territories by force. Such an operation would be costly, but easily within Israel's power. It is hard to believe, however, that the Palestinians would wish to provoke such an extreme response.

King Hussein, too, would be anxious to prevent the Palestinians from importing large amounts of arms, since he would undoubtedly see the Palestinian state as no less a threat to his own regime than to Israel. (It has been said that if an armed Yasir Arafat were in the same room with King Hussein and Menachem Begin, he would shoot Hussein first.)

Even if the Palestinians did import arms, their potential ability to inflict damage on Israel would be restricted primarily to sporadic terrorism (again at the risk of retaliation). Except in the unlikely eventuality that they acquired nuclear weapons (an eventuality Israel would do anything to prevent), no amount of weaponry in Palestinian hands could shift the balance of power between

Israel and what would be a tiny, densely populated state. Thus, even a militarized Palestinian state would not necessarily be any more threatening to Israel than the present national movement; actually, such a state would in several respects be more vulnerable.

A Palestinian state would become a Soviet outpost on Israel's border. Israel already lives with one Soviet outpost on its border—namely, Syria—so there would be nothing qualitatively different about such a threat on the West Bank. Moreover, it is very possible that the Soviet Union would not become significantly involved with a Palestinian state.

There are several reasons for this. First, the Soviet Union (which supported the creation of a Jewish state in 1947) has refused to endorse the PLO's program even though it has sponsored PLO terrorism. Secondly, the Soviets have consistently affirmed United Nations Resolution 242, and recognize Israel's right to exist within the pre-1967 borders. The Soviets, like other critics of Israel, might protest a unilateral Israeli action, but withdrawal *per se* would hardly conflict with the Soviet position on the Middle East.

Even if the Soviets were inclined to intervene in some way, the United States could be counted on to deter them. In addition, the United States would probably provide aid to Israel to compensate for its territorial sacrifices, as Congress has already done in the case of the Israeli withdrawal from the Sinai.

The possibility of Soviet involvement would likewise be minimized by the active concern of Jordan—Hussein, after all, has kept the Soviets from establishing a presence in his country. Also, the population of the new Palestinian state, predominantly Muslim, would have its own reasons for not wishing too close a connection with the atheists in the Kremlin.

A Palestinian state would be flooded by immigrants who would strain the region's absorptive capacity and stimulate expansionist tendencies. Replace the word "Palestinian" with "Jewish" in this sentence and you have the argument made by the Arabs against the Zionists in the 20's and 30's. To be sure, the fact that the argument proved wrong in the case of Jewish Palestine does not mean it would be wrong in the case of an Arab Palestinian state, with its relatively limited area of settlement. But even so, this does not necessarily mean that the state would be expansionist.

Israel could not reasonably expect to limit Arab immigration into the territories (as is envisioned in the autonomy scheme). The one non-negotiable issue for the Zionists was always unrestrained immigration, and the Palestinians cannot be expected to behave any differently. Yet such immigration would not necessarily be a negative development.

For one thing, it would reduce the Palestinian presence in other Arab countries, and with it the Palestinians' ability to compel support from weak governments like Saudi Arabia and the Gulf states. Furthermore, since the Palestinians would be unable to return to their former physical homes, most of which have long since been destroyed, many would have little desire to return at all. By and large, only the poor, lower-class Palestinians, primarily refugees in Lebanon, would be likely to immigrate. The rest—and especially the intellectuals and upper-class Palestinians, the ones who talk the most fiercely about Palestinian nationalism—would most likely prefer to stay where they are rather than move to such a small, economically unviable area. It may turn out, in other words, that the Palestinians' attachment to their homeland will be as tenuous as the Israelis have claimed.

Jewish settlers would not leave the territories. Israelis remember well the unpleasant scene of soldiers forcibly removing settlers from the town of Yamit when Israel returned the Sinai to Egypt, and do not relish the prospect of a replay with the more militant and far more numerous settlers on the West Bank. In fact, now that the Jewish population of the territories has reached somewhere between 50,000 and 70,000, it is no longer possible to force the settlers to leave.

By acting unilaterally, Israel could establish boundaries which would incorporate as many settlers as possible. As for the many still outside the state, they could be given a choice of moving back within the borders of Israel and receiving compensation, or remaining where they are and retaining Israeli citizenship. If they were to choose the latter course, however, they would also have to be told that they were now on their own and could not expect to be rescued at the first sign of trouble.

From Israel's perspective, it would be advisable to do whatever possible to prevent any Jews from remaining in the former territories. The reason is that Jewish settlements would offer little or no strategic value, would be vulnerable to Arab attack, and could become hostages to Palestinian demands on other issues. If most settlers moved back to Israel, as they no doubt would do, there would be that much less provocation of the Arabs, which should further reduce the threat of violence. By eliminating most of the settlements, Israel could also eliminate an unnecessary drain on its troubled economy.

For their part, the Palestinians, by allowing settlers to remain in peace, could prove that they have no animus toward Jews and are the peace-loving people they have claimed to be. They could also permit settlers to remain subject to Israeli law.

The Arabs would not accept a state without Jeru-

salem. As noted above, one of the principal advantages of unilateral action is that it would allow Israel to define its own borders without any need to compromise (though some concessions would be prudent) or sacrifice security concerns. One need not go into specifics, but those borders would surely reflect modifications of the lines established in the 1949 armistice agreements: essentially, something resembling the boundaries envisaged in the Allon Plan. In other words, the policy advocated here would combine a partial annexation of the kind desired by Israel's Right with the withdrawal insisted upon by the Left, the latter taking precedence.

The most important modification of the 1949 lines would be that Jerusalem would remain the undivided capital of Israel. That is perhaps the one territorial issue that everyone in Israel agrees upon. No doubt a refusal to make concessions on Jerusalem would provide the Arabs with an ongoing justification for hostility, but that would be so even in a negotiated settlement.

Nevertheless, some sort of accommodation would have to be struck with regard to Jerusalem because the eastern half of the city is the largest Arab urban center in the area, because the city links the two main regions of the West Bank, and because the Old City contains the Muslim holy places. Muslims already control their own shrines, and there is no danger of Israel limiting access to the city; therefore, the primary change would have to concern the terms of political affiliation. Israel could allow the Palestinians in Jerusalem to choose between Israeli and Palestinian citizenship, without detriment to their participation in the administration of the city. Palestinians could also be given greater representation in city government and greater control over their own neighborhoods.

Withdrawal from Gaza would mean a return to the situation that helped precipitate the Suez War. It is true that terrorist attacks launched from the Gaza Strip were one of the causes of the 1956 war, but it must be remembered that Nasser was responsible for ordering most of those attacks, not Palestinian nationalists. There is really no justification whatsoever for Israel to hold on to Gaza. One can cite no less an authority than David Ben-Gurion, who, though he certainly recognized the security threat, said after Israel's conquest of the territory in 1956: "Gaza as part of Israel could be like a cancer. . . . To take a small territory with a vast Arab population would be the worst possible exchange." Subsequently, of course, Israel withdrew. Since 1967, the cancer has returned—and grown. The only cure is excision.

Here, too, there might be some modifications in the borders to incorporate part of the area settled by Jews. But the majority of the Gaza Strip and its three-quarters of a million miserable refugees should be given their independence.

The Palestinians already have a state—Jordan. It is a historical fact that Jordan is Palestine. But it is a political reality that the Palestinians are not prepared to accept Jordan as a substitute for a state on the West Bank. Nor, consequently, would King Hussein be able to accept the territories even if Israel were to offer them to him. Many Palestinians may want to annex Jordan, but pursuit of that policy could only begin after independence in the territories.

Moreover, a Palestinian state established in Jordan would be a far greater danger to Israel than one on the West Bank. Instead of a small nation with limited economic and military potential, a Jordanian Palestine, with its larger population and its more vital economy, would have the capacity to develop a serious military threat.

This would especially be true if the essentially cautious Hussein, who appears content to live in peace with Israel, were replaced by Palestinians determined to destroy Israel. The Marxist-Leninists in the PLO, such as George Habash and Nayef Hawatmeh, could conceivably create a state in Jordan that would ally itself with Syria. And even without these Communists in power, Israel would face a combined force of Jordan/Palestine and Syria instead of the present situation in which Jordan acts as a brake on Syria's bellicosity. The danger would be far more contained in the case of a tiny Palestinian state squeezed between Israel and Jordan.

FROM a practical standpoint, it is obvious that a unilateral solution to the Israeli problem is not likely in the immediate future. The divisions in Israel are currently too deep, and the sentiment to retain Judea and Samaria too widespread. As time passes, however, it will become increasingly clear that a proposal along the lines of the one offered here may be the best alternative to occupation. There are already signs of such recognition. For example, one prominent member of Likud, Shlomo Lahat, the mayor of Tel Aviv, publicly called this past January for Israeli withdrawal from the territories.

No one should expect the Palestinians, who have consistently been unwilling to settle for anything less than the whole loaf, to be overjoyed by such a magnanimous gesture on Israel's part. Nevertheless, it is clear the Palestinians would be much better off. Theirs would be the self-determination they have been demanding, without any of the restrictions that might otherwise be imposed on them in negotiations by either Jordan or Israel. The only constraint would be on their ability to wage war, but to a people truly interested in peace, why should that be an impediment?

The Arab states can also be counted on to object to Israel's actions; they prefer to see the Palestinians confined to refugee camps forever, where they can go on serving as pawns in the war against

Israel. But the proposal advanced here is in any case not designed to resolve the Arab-Israeli conflict. That conflict will persist so long as there are Arabs unwilling to accept Israel's right to exist. Although an Israeli withdrawal might help reduce regional instability created by the problems relating to Palestinian terrorism and refugees in Arab countries, as a whole the region would remain volatile if only because of inter-Arab rivalries which have nothing to do with Israel.

There should also be no illusions about the response of the international community to a unilateral Israeli action. Even though Israel would be satisfying the demands made on it for the last two decades, few, if any, nations would applaud this move. No matter how much of the territories Israel were to surrender, it would be criticized for not giving up enough. The territorial concessions would be ignored, the failure to negotiate stressed. It would be said that Israel had repudiated its obligation under international law to seek a diplomatic solution, and was acting irresponsibly by leaving the situation in chaos.

The cynical response to such a charge is that international law is something that "the righteous do not need and the wicked do not obey." A more serious answer would be that Israel had tried the legal route for four decades, without success, and could no longer wait for a partner to join the negotiations. According to the United Nations Charter, a nation has the right to act in self-defense, and that is precisely what Israel would be doing. The Charter specifies that the "acquisition of territory by war" is "inadmissible." It does not say the relinquishment of territory in the interests of peace is inadmissible.

The attitude of the United States, however, Israel's principal ally, is important. It is difficult to predict how the United States would react. On the one hand, the Arabists in the State Department would surely protest that Israel had not given up enough, and that their own diplomatic role in resolving the conflict had been curtailed. But most Americans, including the Jewish community, would, I believe, applaud Israel's courage and would be prepared to provide whatever assistance were required to ensure a peaceful transition.

Actually, one good reason for Israel to act this year would be that it has good friends in President Ronald Reagan and Secretary of State George Shultz. True, the current presidential candidates (with the exception of Jesse Jackson), are also pro-Israel, but inevitably there is a greater risk in waiting for a new American administration to take office.

In any case, Israel has learned from past experience that, once confronted with a *fait accompli*, the United States and the rest of the world can do little. Besides, what in the end could the United Nations or anyone else do—pressure Israel to *re-occupy* the territories?

ONE last point. American Jews have traditionally been hesitant to call publicly on Israel to make territorial concessions or to advocate specific solutions to Israel's problems. The reason is that they are thousands of miles away and do not live under the constant threat of attack. Nor are American Jews called upon to serve in the army that defends Israel, or to watch and wait anxiously as their

children leave to fulfill their national military obligations.

That is all true, and one feels a certain anguish in breaking with a sound principle. There is a comfort to be had, however, in the thought that just as an American Jew concerned with the safety of Israel is free to speak out, Israelis remain equally free to ignore what he says.

David Bar-Illan: "Think of the alternative," Henry Kissinger used to say when pressing Israelis and Arabs to modify their positions in the days of his shuttle diplomacy in the Middle East. It is a salutary admonition, since we tend to forget that the alternative to *bad* is not always *good*. It can be *worse*. It can be catastrophe.

Israel is in a bad situation. Not because it won the 1967 war and, as a result, added a million hostile Arabs to the population under its control; not because it suffers universal calumny for allegedly mistreating them; not because the higher Arab birth rate poses a demographic threat; and not even because the territory of the land of Israel is also claimed by Ishmael. Difficult as these problems are, they can all yield to rational resolution. What defies resolution and what makes Israel's situation truly bad is that 300 million Arabs consider the very existence of Israel an offense to their sense of history and destiny.

Once upon a time there were Arab leaders, like King Hussein's great-uncle the Emir Feisal, who believed that the Jews should have a state on both sides of the Jordan, and that the Jewish and Arab national movements "complete one another" and should work together for a "reformed Middle East." Those Arabs are dead, and any Arab leader today who expresses remotely similar sentiments is assured of joining them in short order. There are, however, Arab leaders who were convinced by their defeat in 1967 that Israel could not be destroyed, and that its existence had to be tolerated. Indeed, so convinced were they that nothing short of a total reversal of that defeat could reawaken their hopes of wiping Israel off the map. Yet such a reversal is precisely what the whole world now appears to want.

The one, and perhaps only, international consensus today, stretching from Israel's best friend—the United States—to its worst enemies—the PLO, Syria, and the Soviet Union—is that Israel should return to the very borders which in 1967 encouraged the Arab attempt, in the words of the late Egyptian President Nasser, to "drive the Jews into the sea." Not surprisingly, a large part of the American Jewish "leadership," and a third of the Israeli population—if the public-opinion polls are

to be believed—join in this consensus, feeling that nothing could be worse than the present situation.

There is no doubt that the status quo has little to recommend it. If the "uprising" in the territories is a true reflection of the popular mood there, Israel has on its hands 1.3 million Arabs whose hatred is boundless and unrelenting. Moreover, the massive and, in places, violent "peace day" demonstration within the pre-'67 borders, held in solidarity with the "uprising," may indicate that the hostility of the 700,000 Arab citizens of the state of Israel is, though better camouflaged, not less intense. So even if the demographers who predict that the Arabs of Israel and the territories will constitute 45 percent of the total population by the year 2000 are as wrong as demographers have been in the past, and even if the ratio of Arabs to Jews remains constant for the foreseeable future, a full one-third of the population will be chronically hostile, violent, and disruptive. Hardly a happy state of affairs.

It is, of course, impossible to tell if this hostility is actually all that pervasive among Palestinian Arabs—as impossible as it is to tell what the Soviet people really feel about their regime. The fear of the PLO in the territories is no less effective than the fear of the KGB in the Soviet Union, and while there is no penalty for bad-mouthing Israel before television cameras in Gaza, Judea, Samaria, or East Jerusalem, condemning the PLO is tantamount to suicide. This may be why during the riots only a few merchants, at the end of their tether, dared to complain on TV about anonymous callers who had threatened their lives if they defied the strike order, and of masked youths who had burned down a few stores just as a warning.

At any rate, Israelis working in the administration of the territories still believe there is an apolitical silent majority in the adult population that prefers the employment, freedom, civil rights (though no political rights for the time being), and security under Israeli rule to the kind of vicious tyranny the PLO imposed on its mini-state in Lebanon before it was broken up by the Israelis in 1982, or to the oppression, discrimination, poverty, and lack of opportunities most of them suffered during the nineteen years of Jordanian rule (1948-67). But even if the silent majority feels this

way, its preferences are irrelevant. The dynamics of the Arab street are such that the moderation of the majority inevitably evaporates before the militant radicalism of the minority.

Faced with such hostility, some Israeli leaders on both sides of the political spectrum have recommended unilateral withdrawal from Arab population centers. "Let them stew in their own juice" is the common rejoinder to questions about the internal mayhem that would inevitably ensue. But the consequences of unilateral withdrawal would not be limited to internecine struggles. Unilateral Israeli action would be seen as surrender to riots, which could only lead to the conclusion that more riots would bring more retreat. It is not, after all, the pervasive presence of Israeli soldiers that creates disturbances. As anyone who knows the territories will attest, the Israeli presence is hardly in evidence there in times of calm, and the day-to-day administration has been steadily and rapidly transferred to Arab hands.

The simple truth is that incitement in the streets and the mosques is not against the Israeli army's presence in the towns themselves, but against Jewish rule of "Arab lands." If Israel forfeits its right to enter the towns and villages, they will be transformed from islands of occasional anarchy to bases of permanent terrorism: little Beiruts from which violence will radiate unhindered to the main roads, the Jewish settlements, and ultimately to the cities of Israel.

BUT if unilateral Israeli action is ruled out, what about a negotiated settlement?

In what has become a parody of the democracies-negotiating-with-themselves syndrome, most Israeli leaders have been gauging the viability of peace plans not according to Israel's interests and needs but according to what the Arabs would accept. In December 1984, Hussein, counting on an agreement with the PLO's Arafat, indicated that he would consent to direct talks with Israel on the condition that a PLO-approved delegation from the territories participated in the negotiations. At that point, Shimon Peres (who was then Prime Minister) rejected the alternative Soviet proposal for an international conference on the Middle East as a lethal trap intended to force Israel and the U.S. into untenable positions, and he passionately inveighed against it in his meetings with Reagan and Shultz. But when, a few months later, Hussein, under Syrian pressure, changed his position and insisted on an international conference as the only venue for talks, Peres became a passionate pursuer of the idea and tried to sell it to the same Reagan and Shultz.

Since an international conference in which all the participants, including the U.S., are unanimous in seeking an Israeli withdrawal from the territories cannot, unless Israel walks out, end with anything but a withdrawal, the slogan "international conference" has become a code for relin-

quishing the territories. Its only opponents are Israelis who object to withdrawal and the few in the American administration who still believe they can achieve Israeli withdrawal without Soviet help and thus get exclusive credit for it in the Arab world.

And, indeed, those who believe in "territorial compromise" and an "international conference"—they are invariably the same people—no longer argue how much territory Israel should exchange for peace, but whether the territories should be relinquished to Jordan or to the PLO.

The "Jordanian option," favored by the Labor party, involves a trade-off of most but not all the territories for peace. The Allon Plan, still nominally part of the Labor-party platform, stipulates annexation by Israel of over one-fourth of Judea-Samaria (the "West Bank") and Gaza, including East Jerusalem. But recent pronouncements by Peres (who is now Foreign Minister) have made it clear that the dovish majority of the Labor party is willing to settle for much less: specifically, a return to the status-quo-ante-June 1967 with minor border changes; Jordanian rule in the territories, which would be demilitarized; security arrangements in the Jordan valley, preferably leaving Israeli settlements there; and a compromise on Jerusalem which would keep it municipally united but would cede the eastern part of the Old City, with the exception of the Jewish quarter, to Jordan.

This scheme has several obvious advantages. The demilitarization of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza is still a *sine qua non* for even the most ardent doves in Israel, and it is more reasonable to demand the demilitarization of a border province than of a whole state. The question of Jerusalem too could become less thorny. It would not have to be the capital of the Arab entity in the territories, merely a "holy city" divided between two sovereignties. The Jordanians would also "know how to handle riots much better than we do," as Peres has said in an obvious reference to the fact that while the picture of every Arab demonstrator struck by an Israeli soldier instantly enters living rooms throughout the world, the slaughter by the Jordanian army of anywhere between 2,000 and 7,000 PLO members during Black September 1970 caused hardly a ripple.

Peres has also maintained that Jordan would prevent terrorists from crossing the border into Israel, just as it is preventing incursions across the Jordan river today. This is not quite borne out by history. Jordan now tries, mostly successfully, to check terrorism for the same reason it refrained from joining the Syrian-Egyptian assault on Israel in 1973: when it was pushed from the Judea-Samaria mountain ridge and across the Jordan river in 1967, the kingdom's position vis-à-vis Israel changed from near-invincibility to extreme vulnerability. But before 1967, when Jordan was

in control of the Judea-Samaria ridges, 971 murder and sabotage missions were carried out by Arab terrorists crossing the armistice lines into Israel, and there were numerous incidents of shellings and other military attacks. In these attacks, 521 Israelis were killed and 1,487 seriously wounded, mostly with Jordanian acquiescence if not active help. Nor was the King Hussein of that time any less ruthless in his attitude to Israel than Nasser. His orders of the day in 1967 called for the annihilation of every Israeli man, woman, and child in the "liberated areas."

Nevertheless, if one had to choose between Jordanian and PLO control of the territories, the former would undoubtedly be preferable.

THERE is, however, one problem with the Jordanian option. It does not exist. The reason is not only that Jordan agreed in Rabat in 1974, and has reaffirmed many times since, that the PLO is the sole representative of the Palestinian people; nor is it merely that adding to the kingdom 1.3 million citizens, among whom the pro-Hashemites are the weakest, would be a reckless gamble. Even more important is the drastic change since 1967 in the balance of power between Jordan and Syria.

What this means was made abundantly clear by the events of 1985. In February of that year, as already noted, Arafat, with his fortunes at their lowest and the hostility between him and Syrian President Assad at its most intense, signed an agreement with Hussein which permitted a Jordanian team, joined by a delegation from the territories approved by the PLO, to negotiate with Israel. Arafat thus forfeited the right to "sole representation" and allowed Hussein to make a separate peace with Israel under American sponsorship, on behalf of the Palestinians. To be sure, it is doubtful that Hussein would have wanted to keep the territories under his own rule if Israel had been persuaded to give them up. (Soon after the 1967 war, he expressed great relief at being rid of them.) But had he succeeded in "liberating" them, his prestige would have been catapulted to unprecedented heights in the Arab world. The United States would also have been handed a diplomatic coup in the Arab world—which is why the Reagan administration greeted the Arafat-Hussein agreement with great enthusiasm, and why the Soviet Union and Syria condemned it.

But American enthusiasm for proved no match for Syrian determination *against*. To assure the demise of the agreement, Assad launched a terror campaign against Jordan. On March 3, less than four weeks after the agreement was announced, a Jordanian airliner was attacked by Syrian agents in Dubai. Eight more attacks on Jordanian targets followed, in Rome, Ankara, Madrid, Athens, and Amman. The Jordanian ambassador to Turkey was assassinated, and Jordanian embassies, airliners, and airport facilities were bombed.

It did not take Hussein long to get the hint. After a failed attempt on his ambassador in Athens on August 30, he had the Saudis arrange a meeting between his prime minister and the Syrian prime minister in mid-September to discuss "rapprochement." On December 30 he met with Assad himself, and then declared that there would be no "separate peace," no negotiations without Syrian and Soviet participation in the talks, and no progress on Judea-Samaria and Gaza without Israeli agreement to return the Golan Heights to Syria. All this was reaffirmed at the Arab summit conference in Amman last November.

Syria's actions should have served as a reminder that terrorism and assassination must always be factored into the Middle Eastern equation. King Hussein's own grandfather, King Abdallah, was assassinated for talking with the Israelis, and the same fate has met thousands of others, big and small: from the clan of the Nashashibis, the opponents of the Grand Mufti of Jerusalem, who were almost wiped out by his henchmen in the 30's, to Issam Sartawi of the PLO, Zafir al-Masri, the mayor of Nablus, Bashir Gemayel of Lebanon, and Anwar Sadat of Egypt. The very fact that Hussein needs the protection of an international conference just to negotiate with Israel means that it is foolhardy to expect him to act independently on anything. He can only parrot the most radical element at the conference, for as Israel's Prime Minister Yitzhak Shamir points out in the current issue of *Foreign Affairs*, anyone who is so afraid of the radicals that he dare not defy them on matters of procedure is not about to defy them on matters of substance.

It therefore follows not only that the Jordanian option is a chimera but that no final peace agreement can be reached unless Israel relinquishes the territories. No Arab ruler can accept less than Egypt's Sadat did at Camp David in 1978—every inch of "occupied land"—or make a separate peace without Syria, and live. If, then, Israel signs a peace treaty, no matter with whom, it will have to withdraw from all the territories, including the Golan Heights, and there will be a Palestinian state in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza.

TO SOME Israelis, mainly on the Left but also among Likud members, a Palestinian state is preferable to the "Jordanian option." They contend that only by satisfying the national aspirations of the Palestinians can peace be achieved, and that these aspirations can only be satisfied by allowing the Palestinians a state of their own in the territories.

But the assumption that a Palestinian state would lead to peace ignores the nature, dynamics, and goals of the various Palestinian groups that would be vying for power there. After all, vicious internal struggles generally follow revolutions, "wars of liberation," and national upheavals even when national identity and cohesion are mature

and deep-rooted. But while *Arab* nationalism goes back to the 19th century, the particularization of Palestinian nationalism began only about two decades ago. (Thus, between 1948 and 1967, when Jordan ruled Judea and Samaria and Egypt ruled Gaza, no talk was heard of a separate Palestinian state there.)

It is, of course, possible to develop passionate nationalistic feelings even in the short span of twenty years. Yet it is unrealistic to expect that the loyalties to the various sponsoring regimes of Palestinian nationalism, or the intensely antagonistic ideologies and grandiose ambitions within the movement itself, can be superseded by unity, national patriotism, and peaceableness. The murderous struggle for power between the Abu Musa and the Arafat factions of the PLO following the organization's departure from Beirut is but a foretaste of what could be expected once the spoils of sovereignty were at stake.

The most powerful groups among the Palestinians today are the PLO faction loyal to Arafat, the Marxists (most of whom are under the overall PLO umbrella), the Islamic fundamentalists, and the pro-Hashemites, each of which is subdivided into mutually hostile factions. Intelligence reports, reinforced by student elections in the universities, indicate that the first three have the largest following among the youth, while the pro-Hashemites, mostly "establishment" businessmen and professionals courted by the Israelis, have lost credibility.

If numbers, international support, organization, and popularity were to determine the outcome, the PLO would win the bloody civil war that would erupt once the Israelis were gone. But one should never underestimate the power of fundamentalist fanaticism. The Iranian practice of giving plastic keys-to-heaven to teen-agers who are then ordered to run over minefields has served as an inspiration for the leaders of the Islamic Jihad and the other fundamentalist sects which thrive in the Gaza district. Sending teen-agers armed with axes, stones, gasoline bombs, and knives against Israeli soldiers was their idea, and the rioters received daily stipends from Iranian agents. Although the Gazan fundamentalists are Sunni, not Shia, Muslims, they say the Ayatollah has "shown the way," and claim to have created a "combination of the two beliefs."

What militates against fundamentalist victory, however, is that it would so threaten Egypt, Syria, and the Soviet Union that they would throw all their very considerable weight behind the PLO. Even so, a victory for the PLO would not mean the end of the struggle. The rival PLO factions led by Arafat, Habash, Jibril, Abu Musa, and Abu Nidal would now turn on one another in a struggle for dominance.

Whichever of these leaders prevailed, it would certainly not be one who declared that the goal of the revolution had been achieved with the establishment of a Palestinian state in the 2,400

square miles of Judea, Samaria, and Gaza. On the contrary, Israeli withdrawal would more likely be accompanied by shellings and incursions across the border, through which each faction would try to prove its zeal and courage, and its right to leadership, by fighting the common enemy.

The whole Lebanon condition would thus be shifted to the new Palestinian state, with Israel a much readier target. Lebanon borders on the sparsely populated rural north of Israel and has a Christian and Shi'ite population on its southern frontier which accommodates an Israeli security belt. But a Palestinian state in Judea-Samaria and Gaza would cut through Jerusalem and flank the city on three sides, touch on Tel Aviv's suburbs, and have a long border, nine to fifteen miles from the sea, with Israel's most thickly populated areas. Palestinian militias, now armed not with gasoline bombs and stones but helicopters, missiles, artillery, and automatic weapons, all quickly imported through ports in Gaza and airfields elsewhere, would have Israeli pedestrians within rifle range, 80 percent of Israel's population and two-thirds of its industry within Katyusha range, and Zion square in Jerusalem and Ben-Gurion airport within mortar range. Israel would be reduced to responding with retaliatory ground raids, the way it did against Jordanian-held territories in the 50's and 60's—or with air raids, as it does in Lebanon today.

Nor would security arrangements similar to those made with Egypt be effective under these conditions. Multinational forces, joint patrols, listening posts, satellite and aerial inspection can all work when 300 miles of desert separate the combatants. They would be as useless in keeping the peace in populated areas as UNIFIL, the UN force, is in southern Lebanon.

IN THE meantime, if the history of other "wars of national liberation" is any guide, the winners of the internal PLO struggle would be those with Soviet sponsorship or, in this case, the backing of the Soviet proxy, Syria. In other words, the most radical forces within the PLO would come to the fore. And once such a faction established its power base, Syria would be invited to bring stability to the area, which it considers as much a part of "Greater Syria" as it does Lebanon. (The PLO version of the resolutions at the recent Amman conference refers to "the struggle of the Palestinian people." In the Syrian version, it is the struggle of "our people.")

Without the Golan Heights, Israel would not be able to prevent a Syrian invasion through the Galilee and northern Jordan. To meet the Syrians, who would by then have achieved strategic parity with Israel, the Israelis would have to fight their way up the mountains of Samaria through the by-now well-armed Palestinian forces, replenished by airborne Syrian divisions landed in Palestinian airfields. Israeli Arabs, swept up in the excitement

of Palestinian nationalism, armed with weapons easily smuggled from the independent Palestinian state next door, and convinced—not baselessly—of an Arab victory, could ambush Israelis going to the front line.

At that point, some might remember the warning of the United States chiefs of staff in a secret report of August 1967, and of virtually every Israeli combat general, that Israel without the Golan Heights and the Judea-Samaria mountain ridge is undefendable. Churchill's warning about the strategic consequences to Czechoslovakia of awarding self-determination to the Sudetenland might also come to mind.

But Israel is not Czechoslovakia. Fighting for its very survival, it would probably be able to stop the Syrians. Yet those who blithely talk of Israel's ability to defeat all the Arab armies, let alone one or two, and who believe that the miracle of the 1967 war could be easily repeated, are ignorant of the changes that have taken place in the balance of power in the region, particularly in the case of Syria. They also ignore the fact that Egypt regards its defense pact with the Arab countries "against Israeli aggression" as taking precedence over its peace treaty with Israel. And what would be a more clear-cut case of "aggression" than Israel's attacking the budding Palestinian state just because it invited Syrian troops to help bring stability to the area?

If Israel were to lose, the Arabs would finally have achieved their hope of "wiping the Jewish state off the map." But even if Israel won, the human cost would be staggering. No one seems to remember now that Israel prepared for 40,000 dead in the 1967 war. It was a reasonable expectation, obviated by a combination of extraordinary circumstances which no longer exist. Even if no chemical weapons were used, Syria's state-of-the-art short- and medium-range missiles; its huge air force, larger than Israel's, with Mig 29s; its 4,500 tanks—a larger force than the U.S. has in Europe; its anti-aircraft command-and-control system connected directly to Moscow; and the "cover" of the Soviet navy based in its port of Tartus—all this would make tens if not hundreds of thousands of Israeli casualties inevitable.

Whatever the outcome of the war with Syria, Israel would not be able to deter, as it did in 1970 and in 1980, a Syrian occupation of Jordan. Even if stopped by the Israelis, the Syrians could overwhelm the Jordanians, particularly as they would be aided by radical, anti-Hashemite Palestinians. When the riots began in Judea and Samaria last December, a few score of these Palestinians were arrested in Jordan for agitating against the King—and this, at a time of cooperation and friendship between Syria and Jordan. The victory of a pro-Syrian, radical faction across the river in the new Palestinian state would create a "go-with-the-winner" psychology that might well sweep the Palestinians in Jordan. Whether Hussein would

be permitted to stay on as a puppet would make little difference: a Syrian takeover would bring Soviet advisers to Aqaba on the Red Sea on the border of Saudi Arabia.

The advocates of a Palestinian state in Judea, Samaria, and Gaza maintain that once given respectability and recognition, and saddled with problems of education and sewage, the PLO would eschew terrorism and act like a civilized government. They cite the example of Kenya's Jomo Kenyatta as an analogy. There are four factors that invalidate the comparison.

First: Kenyatta got what he fought for—not one-third of Kenya but all of it. What the Palestinians want is, at least, all of Western Palestine—that is Judea, Samaria, and Gaza as well as Israel.

Second: the Palestinians have succeeded in appearing like a David fighting the Israeli Goliath, but in fact they do not constitute a helpless force that would be no match for Israel. The PLO was formed—before the territories fell under Israeli rule—as a terrorist arm of Arab governments for the purpose of spearheading a war against Israel. It represents not merely the national aspirations of a tiny people, but Arab power and its ambition to eliminate Israel.

Third: the Kenyans and others fought against truly colonial entities. The British in Africa, like the French in Algeria, could give up and go home. The Jews of Israel are in the only home they have, and have nowhere else to go.

Fourth: while some national-liberation movements have used local terrorism as a temporary measure to achieve independence, terrorism and violence in the Islamic world can be considered neither temporary nor localized. From the western edge of the Arab world, where Morocco has been fighting an endless war against the Algerian-backed Polisario, through bloodsoaked Libya, the Sudan, the Yemens, and Lebanon, to the eastern border of the Arab world on the Persian Gulf, where Iraq has been fighting an endless war with Iran, violence, terrorism, and unending feuds are endemic and ubiquitous. As an Egyptian journalist recently put it, Lebanon is the microcosm of the Arab world.

Thus, to state that "peace, not territory, is Israel's security"; to suggest that peace requires only that the Israelis act with courage, wisdom, and generosity, and respond to Arab violence as if it were a misunderstanding in Scandinavia East; to expect that a reformed Arafat or a born-again Abu Nidal will preside over the one and only sanctuary of coexistence and cooperation in the Arab world—is to insult history and to mock common sense.

IS THERE, then, no hope for peace? A wiser administration of the territories, on the pattern established under Menahem Mil-

son in the early 80's, might still restore a peaceful, if fragile, *modus vivendi*. Much could also be done about the 350,000 refugees still living in camps in the territories, who provide the main cannon-fodder for unrest. A cynical world has for forty years shed crocodile tears over them, but has forbidden Israel to "change their status" by moving them into decent housing. A rehabilitation project might succeed even now in countering the agitation and incitement.

Many Israelis believe that since these refugees originate in pre-'67 Israel and must anyway resettle away from their original homes, they should be relocated in the vast Arab oil-producing countries. Both their economic conditions and the stability of the territories would thereby benefit. But the Arab states, more interested in Israel's discomfiture than in the refugees' welfare, will not cooperate.

Other Israelis, a small minority, believe that only the transfer of a substantial part of the Arab population across the borders would bring permanent peace. They rationalize their idea by citing the relocation of millions of Poles and Germans after World War II, and by the fact that close to a million Jews were forced to leave the Arab countries, three-quarters of whom were resettled in Israel. But a mass transfer is a childish fantasy. Is-

rael is politically and morally incapable of such extreme measures.

Real peace can come only in the event, now not very likely, that a very large number of Jews from the Soviet Union, South and North America, and Europe immigrate to Israel. A massive settling of Judea and Samaria would then make Israel's presence there irreversible, eliminate the current feeling of uncertainty (as abhorrent to political stability as a vacuum is to nature), reconcile the local population to autonomous life under Israeli rule, and finally convince the Arab states to resign themselves to the existence and indestructibility of Israel and give up the war they have been waging against it since the day of its birth.

Another, even less likely, development which might bring peace would be the rise of democratic governments in Jordan and Syria. As in the case of Germany and France, governments truly reflecting the will of the people can bury age-old enmities and render borders a secondary consideration.

Failing such eventualities, the world will have to get used to the idea that the Israel-Arab conflict, like the conflicts in Northern Ireland, the Basque region, Cyprus, Sri Lanka, the Punjab, and others, is insoluble for the foreseeable future. Bad as this is, the only real alternative is worse.

Arms Control & Its Casualties

Mary Tedeschi Eberstadt

WITH the conclusion this past December of the INF accord and the prospect of other agreements to come, an American administration has once again placed arms control at the center of our foreign policy.

Many among the administration's supporters and detractors alike have found this to be an unexpected turn of events. On the Right, the return to arms control has been taken as an abrogation, even betrayal, of the President's conservative ideals. To the Left, it has signaled the success of the anti-nuclear campaign of the early 1980's and the commitment of Mikhail Gorbachev and his reformers to harmonious relations with the West. By the foreign-policy establishment, meanwhile, the reemergence of U.S.-Soviet negotiations has been received as unexpected and welcome evidence of the administration's willingness to abandon ideology for the dictates of realism.

Yet the surprise in these various camps is ill-founded. For on the fundamental soundness of arms control itself, the Reagan administration has been consistent almost from the outset. Supporters and critics to the contrary notwithstanding, the President and his advisers never abandoned the rationale for arms control adopted by preceding administrations. While acknowledging the failures of earlier agreements, officials have traced these failures not to the process of arms control *per se*, but to the unrealistic expectations that previous administrations attached to that process. Just as the Carter administration erred in trusting too much to negotiations with the Soviets, so too, as then-Secretary of State Alexander M. Haig said in 1982, "we must not allow ourselves the error of another extreme. We cannot claim that we are too weak to negotiate and at the same time insist that we are strong enough for a policy of all-out confrontation. . . . We can no more solve our problems by avoiding the negotiating table than by resting our hopes on it alone."

On the other hand, the President and his advisers have also sought to distinguish their own approach to arms control from the failed attempts of their predecessors. They have done so by ex-

plicitly linking the intrinsic merits of particular agreements to the broader issues at stake. As Secretary of State George P. Shultz put it in 1984, "the endeavor to control armaments does not operate in a vacuum. It is a dimension of international politics, and it cannot be divorced from its political context." Arms control, on this view, is "not just a technical exercise; it has to be embedded in a policy and in an environment that reduce our real dangers and make the world safer." To take the administration at its word, then, is to consider its policies toward the Soviet Union not in artificial isolation from the rest of foreign affairs, but with an eye toward the balance of power in general, or what the Soviets know as the "correlation of forces."

One way of measuring that correlation today is to return to some of the realities that the administration faced upon entering office in 1981. It is interesting to recall, in the post-summit climate of 1988, how different the international agenda looked to the United States in the early years of the President's first term. Central America—particularly Nicaragua, where the regime emerging from Somoza's downfall bore all the signs of a Marxist-Leninist vanguard—was an item foremost in the minds of policy-makers in those days. The appearance of anti-Communist resistance movements in Afghanistan, Cambodia, Angola, and elsewhere was another unexpected development, and one that suggested interesting opportunities for an administration claiming to have had enough of the Brezhnev Doctrine of the irreversibility of Communist regimes. But perhaps foremost among the problems that faced the administration was international terrorism. There was a broad feeling throughout the country that the United States, stung and stronger after its humiliation in Iran, was now determined to respond to terrorist assault.

In general, it appeared, this country would inaugurate a new chapter in its foreign policy—one in which it would take an active posture and seek advantage abroad, rather than acquiesce in its own undoing. To examine how the United States has fared with these disparate challenges, then, is to give—by its own standard—a fair measure as well of the success of the Reagan administration's approach to the Soviet Union and arms control.

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IN THE early 1980's, America and the world waited expectantly to see how a deeply conservative administration would respond to the triumph of Leninism in Nicaragua and the assault by Communist guerrillas on El Salvador. Few observers of those years could have predicted the turn that events in Central America have taken since.

The democratically elected government of El Salvador has been substantially strengthened, thanks in part to the determination of the people of that country and in part to the successful—and largely unremarked—prosecution of American policy there. These twin efforts have prevailed despite tremendous pressures from without, including a lengthy campaign of disinformation against the elected government that has been disseminated and even embellished by representatives of the American media. Today, apologists for the Communist FMLN and the guerrilla movement itself have seen their fortunes decline significantly, while the prospects for continued civilian rule in El Salvador appear palpably better than they were when President Duarte first took office.

The case of Nicaragua, by contrast, has been shockingly transformed. That transformation is all the stranger in that year after year, the facts emerging from Nicaragua itself have thoroughly vindicated the administration's support of the *contras* and its opposition to the Sandinista regime.

By 1987, all of the most impassioned arguments that were marshaled against the administration's stand in the early 1980's had been decisively discredited by a steady stream of Nicaraguan exiles and defectors whose reports were confirmed—usually unwittingly—by the brazenness and occasional ineptitude of the Communist regime itself. By the time of the Iran-*contra* hearings in the summer of 1987, it was a matter of public record that the Sandinistas operated as a Leninist vanguard within the country and were systematically quashing all public and private domestic opposition; that the regime was supporting subversion in Costa Rica, El Salvador, Honduras, and even Colombia; that its military might, thanks to Soviet support, was now superior to the combined resources of all its Central American neighbors; that Managua had become a safehouse for guerrillas and international terrorists; that the regime's campaign against religious groups was singularly vicious and, in the case of Jews, classically anti-Semitic; and that its treatment of Indian minorities in the northeast invited charges of racism and even attempted genocide.

Nor were these facts about Nicaragua difficult to discover. They appeared in the liberal and conservative press alike; they were tirelessly repeated and verified by spokesmen for the administration, whose efforts to educate the public to the realities in Nicaragua outstripped all other efforts at public diplomacy. Whatever their disagreements be-

hind closed doors, officials from all corners of the foreign-affairs bureaucracy—the State and Defense Departments, the National Security Council, and the White House—were largely of one mind on the profile that events in Nicaragua should receive.

Whether the administration's critics—particularly those in Congress—chose to avail themselves of this public record was of course a separate matter. Nevertheless, by the mid-1980's the terms of debate over American policy toward Central America had been dramatically reversed. Opponents of aid to the *contras* mustered fewer and fewer objections, and with each passing revelation their objections drew less blood. No wonder, then, that these critics felt such palpable relief at the exposure in 1986 of the possible illegalities which had attended aid to the *contra* movement; indeed, the zeal with which they fastened on the technicalities involved only underlined the exhaustion and obsolescence of their case on its merits.

As if further to justify the administration's position, meanwhile, and to underscore its sense of urgency, the Soviets and their allies in the Nicaraguan regime had been proceeding from strength to strength. By 1987, according to the testimony of defector Roger Miranda Bengoechea, a former major in the Nicaraguan military, the regime was planning to have 600,000 troops under arms (in a country of some three million souls). In that number lay the full measure of the institutionalization of the Soviet-backed dictatorship and the intentions of that regime and its patron toward the region as a whole.

Despite these revelations, however, and despite the ongoing conversion of former opponents to its own side, the administration itself has suffered setback after setback in its attempts to alter events. The largest obstacles placed in its path have been erected by the U.S. Congress. The Boland amendments, in particular—which effectively foreclosed an American response as aid from the Eastern bloc reached staggering proportions—have proved the most crippling of all afflictions which have beset official policy. Large segments of the American media, as well, bear some responsibility for events as they have continued—against all evidence—to resist the implications of their own revelations and to denigrate the *contras* as an outfit staffed by former members of Somoza's guard. Then, too, the administration has itself appeared divided from within, unable or unwilling to choose between the objectives of victory for the resistance forces and a negotiated arrangement aimed at reconciliation with the Communist regime.

Today, through the combination of these various obstacles, American policy has been largely surrendered—in the eyes of the world and at home—to the frantic efforts at accommodation that have been undertaken by the leaders of Nicaragua's weak and frightened neighbors in Central America. These efforts, institutionalized as various

"peace plans," would deny the *contras* a military victory and effectively legitimize the Communist regime in Managua. Thus have the recipients of American foreign aid become the arbiters of its policy toward the Soviet challenge in this hemisphere.

THE explanation now making the rounds for this surreal spectacle is that the Reagan administration was done in by the exposure of the covert operation that supplied the *contras* with funds derived from the 1985 sale of arms to Iran. This explanation, however, only grazes the surface of the impact of that exposure on American policy. The most telling revelation of the Iran-*contra* hearings was not what Oliver North and his aides did in their attempts to supply the resistance, but what their superiors did *not* do when the hearings became, in another surprising reversal, a potential medium for the selfsame message about Nicaragua that the White House had tried to purvey over some six years' time.

For two weeks in the summer of 1987, thanks to his own talents and the arrogance of his would-be tormentors, Oliver North had at his personal disposal more public sympathy, more airtime, and a larger audience than any other official had enjoyed in the effort to win American hearts and minds to the *contra* cause. No moment in the history of the Reagan administration could have been riper for a populist appeal to the nation on behalf of that cause. Yet the President and his men—who had insisted, through the years, that the strategic threat looming in Nicaragua dwarfed all other events in this hemisphere; who had argued that to neglect the *contras* was to risk, as Secretary Shultz once put it, "two, three, many Nicaraguas" in the years to come; who had compared the *contra* movement with the Founding Fathers and the French resistance in World War II—all fell mute.

There are those who argue that the failure to capitalize on Oliver North's success was but one in a series of such opportunities missed by an administration weakened by the Iran-*contra* hearings. Others lay blame at the door of those ubiquitous, risk-averse guardians of the President's personal popularity. Such explanations have their place. But the plain fact is that by the summer of 1987, midway between the "success" of the meeting in Reykjavik in October 1986 and the hoped-for summit with Gorbachev, the administration could not, with any credibility, rest a popular appeal for aid on the only pillar without which all its arguments would collapse. That pillar was Soviet intentions—toward the United States in general, and as manifested in the case of Nicaragua in particular.

Unless the argument for the *contras* is anchored in the seriousness of Soviet intentions, Nicaragua becomes just another dictatorship, a Marxist variation on the familiar *caudillo* theme. Take away

Soviet intentions, and the *contras* become a disgruntled band of have-nots, an annoying complication in Central America's search for peace. Without the ingredient of Soviet intentions, Communist Nicaragua becomes a regional, not an international, issue; it becomes an issue to be settled—as reason would suggest—by the leaders of Central America itself. Absent the Soviet Union, in sum, the question of Nicaragua becomes what it has become today.

Thus, by the summer of 1987, the administration could not give Nicaragua the importance that earlier rhetoric implied it deserved. Such an emphasis would have been impossible for two reasons. First, as a practical matter, it would have been self-defeating to keep the foreign-affairs bureaucracy engaged in two major efforts, of which one was conciliatory toward the Soviet Union and the other militantly antagonistic. But this practical problem shrinks beside the more abstract conundrum involved in such an effort, which would have called into question the very coherence of the administration's views.

If the United States could negotiate amicably, and fairly, with the Soviet Union over nuclear weapons—those threats to the very existence of life on our planet, as spokesmen have repeatedly recalled—then who were the Nicaraguan rebels to stand in the way of that process? What were their problems, against the problem of the survival of mankind? When, moreover, the administration itself was citing the Soviets' search for peace under a vigorous new leader as the justification for ongoing negotiations over arms control, how could it simultaneously accuse them of harboring serious designs on this hemisphere?

Up to a point, of course, any government will risk charges of hypocrisy in the interests of expediency. To invite charges of wholesale incoherence, however, is a more dangerous matter altogether. This is especially true when, as happened after 1986, the executive and legislative branches are controlled by different parties, with the result that each must vie even harder for public attention and support. To risk incoherence is to risk confusing and alienating that public—as, more prosaically, it is to risk deflecting the bureaucracy from the expedient pursuit of objectives.

That is why the Reagan administration could neither capitalize on Oliver North's testimony nor mount a major drive for popular support on its own; and that, together with public and congressional pressures for neglecting Nicaragua and pursuing arms negotiations instead, is why the story of American policy toward Nicaragua has become one of abdication and inaction. "Could there be any greater tragedy," the President once asked, "than for us to sit back and permit this cancer to spread, leaving my successor to face far more agonizing decisions in the years ahead?" Today that tragedy has become an offering on the altar of arms control.

NOR is Nicaragua the only example of how policy and principle have unraveled in the course of the administration's overtures to the Soviets. Indeed, Nicaragua is but a case in point of the undoing of official policy toward anti-Communist resistance movements at large.

It is now eight years since the Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan and began a war there that has included such longstanding practices as the indoctrination and Russification of Afghan youth and such now-familiar barbarities as torture, the bombing of refugees, the use of mines disguised as everyday objects including toys, and battlefield tactics conducted, as Under Secretary of State Michael Armacost put it, "without regard for civilian casualties." Some three to four million Afghans have fled the country; some one to one-and-a-half million—there is no reliable census of the dead—have perished. Against this onslaught the Afghan resistance has grown stronger year by year, defying all odds, all reason, and all expectation in its efforts to vanquish the Soviet army.

Until recently, the American response to this war has remained consistent and, generally speaking, effective. It was Afghanistan that roused President Carter from his dogmatic slumber and prompted American withdrawal from the 1980 Olympics and the cancellation of a U.S.-Soviet grain deal. (President Reagan did, in 1981, renew grain sales in an unconcealed attempt to placate American farmers.) It was Afghanistan, likewise, that proved easiest for the Reagan administration to defend among its policies toward anti-Communist resistance forces. For several years the United States has run what appears to be a successful covert operation of supplying aid to the Afghan *mujahideen*. It has also maintained a continuing, not-so-covert policy of substantial aid to Pakistan, which bears the brunt of Afghanistan's refugees and Soviet political wrath. In late 1986, after years of debate in the United States, the Afghan resistance at last began to receive shoulder-fired Stinger missiles—a move that substantially altered the balance of forces on the ground as the resistance has since managed to shoot down hundreds of Soviet planes.

Meanwhile, however, the political war—one equally critical for a force as vastly outnumbered and outgunned as the Afghan resistance—has taken a more tragic turn. That turn is all the more dramatic for having been so unexpected. Over the years since the Soviet invasion, American support for Pakistan and the Afghan resistance has been remarkably strong and bipartisan. It has remained so not only because of the extraordinary efforts of the *mujahideen*, but because the United States and much of the world have seen the Soviet occupation for what it is: an indisputable attempt to subjugate a neighboring state and erase its people as an independent ethnic and political entity. Even the United Nations General Assembly—as

faulty a moral arbiter as can be found—has been unable to ignore the carnage in Afghanistan, which it has condemned by majority vote for eight consecutive years. The ability to comprehend and tell the truth about Afghanistan has thus been a mainstay not only of domestic support for the resistance, but of whatever exists in the way of international pressures against the Soviets for their actions. Without this political and moral understanding, the *mujahideen* successes would have been unthinkable, as would any lasting settlement for that ravaged nation today.

Yet this crucial advantage is fast disappearing at the hands of an administration that once mocked Jimmy Carter for his illusions about Soviet intentions. It was not the Carter but the Reagan administration that has now transformed Afghanistan from a singular and clear-cut episode of Soviet expansion into one among many "regional conflicts" that are judged to bedevil relations between the United States and the Soviet Union.

THE theology of "regional conflicts" has evolved as part of the four-point agenda now guiding American negotiations with the Soviets. It features, in practical terms, ongoing talks between American diplomats and their Soviet counterparts over events in these various battlegrounds. It has also come to include annual calls at the United Nations by the President himself on behalf of his four-point agenda for "resolving" such "problems" as Afghanistan, Nicaragua, Angola, and Cambodia. Each of these has been stripped of its political distinctiveness to become fodder for ongoing U.S.-Soviet "talks" about areas that are in plain fact consumed by Soviet-sponsored war.

"The purpose of these talks," as outlined by Under Secretary Armacost, "is not to negotiate solutions behind the backs of the parties concerned. Rather, they provide a forum for airing concerns in order to lessen the risks of misperception or miscalculation." Today, as a direct consequence of this "airing," the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan stands equated in official documents with the war for Nicaragua and other anti-Communist efforts as a problem of mutual concern to both sides.

The unique facts about Afghanistan—the blatant Soviet expansionism, the brutality of the occupation, the forcible attempt to diminish and then absorb an entire sovereign people—have very nearly disappeared from official and unofficial view. Any American who depends on his government to tell the truth about Afghanistan would know less today, eight long years and over a million Afghans later, than he would have learned by listening to President Carter. "Afghanistan Day," to be sure, remains an annual event, accompanied by masculine rhetoric from the President and other officials. Yet these exercises have as little weight as any other routine pronouncements; and

they continue to be refuted by reality. By January 1988, after the Soviets pledged to withdraw their forces, the State Department and the White House could be heard wrangling over how soon the United States might stop supplying the *mujahideen*. American aid, once justified as a strategic and moral necessity, appeared to have become a diplomatic bargaining chip.

Nor are truth and clear-cut policies the only victims of the process that has developed around "regional conflicts." American friends on the edge of the battlefields in Central America, Africa, and Asia are uneasy about American intent, and thus more vulnerable to Soviet and Soviet-inspired pressures; American allies elsewhere have less reason than ever to lend moral, much less material, support to the anti-Communist side; and anti-American radicals everywhere are free to draw heartening conclusions about the persistence of American will against the temptations of the negotiating table.

What has the administration gained from this squandering of its moral and political capital? The Soviets may, indeed, remove themselves from Afghanistan under diplomatic cover; but the character of the regime left in their wake depends entirely on America's commitment to the resistance—a commitment that appears to be eroding already. Nor have the Soviets proved accommodating elsewhere. On the contrary: Soviet involvement in other "regional conflicts," as measured by men and materiel, is on the rise.

But while the international value to the United States of talks over "regional conflicts" has been negative, something has indeed been won by the administration in its attempt to engage the Soviets in problems of their own instigation. As with the "human-rights" portion of the administration's agenda, talks over "regional conflicts" have sometimes served to soften objections *at home* to the simultaneous pursuit of arms control. The President and his advisers know well the derisive verdict that has fallen on the *détente* of Nixon and Kissinger, and they have sought to avoid a similar legacy for themselves. "Regional conflicts" and "human rights" have become, in reality if not by design, domestic figleaves for the pursuit of arms agreements.

Yet it is arms control that has driven these other "concerns," not vice versa. Neither Afghanistan, nor Nicaragua, nor Angola has prompted the United States to cancel any talks over arms control; nor has the conclusion of any arms agreement ever been made contingent on success in other parts of the agenda. The administration has repeatedly observed, as Kenneth Adelman (then head of the Arms Control and Disarmament Agency) put it in 1985, that "the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan and intervention in the affairs of Angola and Ethiopia . . . effectively iced arms control in general and SALT II in the late 1970's." It has just as consistently failed to show that So-

viet involvement in these and other battlefields has diminished, or to make any other effective connection between Soviet behavior and U.S.-Soviet negotiations over arms control. "Linkage," whatever life it once had, is a corpse today. It was not regional conflicts or human rights that sent the President to Reykjavik; nor did any of these "concerns" bring Gorbachev to the United States. Without arms control, the process that today surrounds "regional conflicts" would have been still-born.

That events have turned out so very differently from what might have been expected in 1981 is of serious consequence not only to the United States, but to the forces whose anti-Communist cause it has professed to champion. The gravity of this result is only emphasized by the fact that military aid to the various movements has itself scarcely ever been commensurate with the strategic and moral stakes that justified U.S. support in the first place. The Reagan "doctrine" lost its principles in the pursuit of arms negotiations, and lost its momentum as it failed to produce victory anywhere on the ground. Each failure reinforced the other.

STILL, of all the policies affected by the administration's pursuit of arms control, probably none is more important—or has been less remarked upon—than the rise and fall of the American position on terrorism.

Throughout the first term of Ronald Reagan's presidency, the subject of international terrorism—its causes, consequences, and hoped-for defeat—remained foremost among the concerns of his chief policy-makers and advisers. It achieved this prominence for reasons both practical and political. It was terrorism, after all—in the form of the seizure and long imprisonment of American personnel in Iran—that had ensured Jimmy Carter his unhappy exit from the White House and destroyed any hopes he might have harbored for a second term. Too, America's humiliation in Iran had seemed to whet the appetite of hostile forces elsewhere; even after Reagan's election, the number of recorded attacks, by official count, remained steady and high, with over 200 directed against the United States in 1983 alone. These included the destruction of the American embassy in Beirut and the murders of hundreds of Marines in their barracks, as well as the attack on the embassy annex in Kuwait.

Against this grim reality the administration mounted a fierce campaign to educate the American public to the causes of terrorism and the necessity of a vigorous response. Its position, as advanced by Secretary Shultz and repeated well into the President's second term, included the recognition that terrorism was not random violence but a form of deliberate political warfare; that it was directed against democracies by forces hostile to their principles and civilization; that the democracies had the right, indeed the obligation, to de-

fend themselves by retaliatory and even preemptive force; and that the United States in particular must never become, in Shultz's famous phrase, the "Hamlet of nations," hesitating over its response when persistence and action were demanded. The corollary of "no deals with terrorists" became a catch-phrase for this position and was reiterated before the allies and indeed the world.

Nor was evidence lacking to suggest that the United States intended to act on its words. The forcing down of an Egyptian plane carrying terrorists responsible for the *Achille Lauro* hijacking demonstrated the American willingness to step in when other governments suffered a failure of nerve. The air strike against Libya in April 1986 confirmed that the United States was prepared to act on its view that governments, too, could be held to account for sponsoring terrorist activities. True, the American failure to retaliate when hundreds of Marines were killed in their sleep in Lebanon—to cite only the most shocking such failure—opened a chasm between rhetoric and reality which would only widen with time. Nevertheless, for a substantial period in the mid-1980's it appeared that the United States had made considerable progress toward understanding the nature of terrorism and defending itself against assault. Even the European allies, whose relative timidity and reluctance were greeted scornfully in the United States, rallied for a time in the form of summit declarations and practical measures aimed at improving coordination and cooperation.

Today, however, the United States stands humiliated for these efforts, reduced to entering timorous objections in the face of episodes—such as France's blatant deal returning a terrorist to Iran in December 1987—that would have roused public and official wrath here only two short years ago. Seldom in American foreign policy has a position unraveled so quickly and so publicly, or brought so much shame to its proponents.

As with Nicaragua, the failure of America's terrorism policy is an issue destined for a long and grisly dissection. Adverse events may be recalled in passing: America's failure to retaliate against Syria for repeated assaults; Israel's exchange, in the spring of 1985, of 1,150 terrorists and political prisoners for three of its own captive POW's; the reluctance of the European allies to cement a unified position. These and other setbacks have played a part in the demise of what once appeared to be a program of effective Western resistance. Nevertheless, the responsibility for America's own failure to maintain the position on terrorism that its leaders set out for themselves remains squarely, and inescapably, at home.

THE most obvious villain of the piece, and the one now most often cited, is the administration's decision, taken in December 1985, to attempt to bribe Iranian officials for the release of American hostages in Lebanon. The

revelation of that decision has indeed dealt stated policy a blow from which it has not recovered—and will not recover, at least for the duration of Reagan's presidency. Yet it is critical to ask not only how the decision was taken, or who opposed it and when (the Tower Commission having reported as much as anyone could want to know about these matters), but *why* the damage suffered by the folly of the Iranian initiative should have proved so irremediable. After all, 1987 was not the first year in which American officials were exposed subverting official policies. Under President Carter, for example, Ambassador Andrew Young was revealed to have met with the PLO in a clear violation of American policy; yet that fiasco caused no lasting damage to the American position toward Israel. If the Iranian initiative was indeed likewise an aberration, an independent departure from policy—as the President has subsequently come to admit—then why the enduring humiliation, the abject sense of defeat, the wholesale collapse of a position as carefully constructed and even as popular as the administration's on terrorism?

The answer is that the intellectual foundations of that policy were already tottering months before America and the world received news of Robert McFarlane's fateful trip to Teheran. What brought them to a crash was not the revelation in November 1986 of an arms shipment, but the events of September and October of that year that culminated in the exchange of an American journalist, Nicholas Daniloff, for Gennadiy Zakharov, a Soviet spy.

In August 1986, after Zakharov, a UN employee, had been detained by the FBI for spying, the Soviets responded promptly by seizing Daniloff, a reporter for *U.S. News & World Report*. It is difficult to remember, after months of media attention toward the events leading up to Gorbachev's visit to the United States, the public response to Daniloff's release from the Soviet Union on September 30 and Zakharov's departure for home the next day. For one thing, the President followed his announcement of Zakharov's release with the revelation of his upcoming meeting in Reykjavik with General Secretary Gorbachev. The result was, as one reporter put it, "a dizzying pace" of announcements after which—as American officials so clearly hoped would happen—public attention was quickly focused away from the question of Daniloff and toward the agenda in Reykjavik. True, that diversion also appeared to be welcomed not only by the media at large, but by those segments of the American public that are perennially mesmerized by all U.S.-Soviet diplomatic maneuvers. Nevertheless, the significance of the deal for Daniloff and its effect on the policy toward terrorism remains clear.

American officials themselves drew the connection—and loudly so—in their initial response to Daniloff's kidnapping. "Let there be no talk," Secretary Shultz declared at Harvard shortly after

Daniloff was seized, "of a deal for Nick Daniloff." The United States and Daniloff himself, Shultz asserted, had ruled out that possibility. "No deal" was repeated by other officials in the days to come, as was Shultz's assurance that "these two people, Zakharov and Daniloff, are in no way comparable, and we are not going to trade them off against each other." In a speech at the United Nations later in the month, the President himself announced that "in effect, he [Daniloff] was taken hostage"—a formulation again reiterated at the highest levels. The implications of this rhetoric were unambiguous: the United States, whose public position on the seizure of Americans abroad was deemed to be unmistakable, would make no exception for a Soviet kidnapping. Behind the insistence that no deal would be made for Daniloff lay the moral and political weight of the American stand against terrorism.

When, some three weeks later, Daniloff and Zakharov nearly passed through the same airspace en route to their respective homes, the implications were equally unambiguous. The official insistence that, as the President put it, "there was no connection between these two releases" met with inevitable disbelief and even shock. So widespread was public skepticism that when Secretary Shultz was asked by a television journalist whether the administration would have to live with the impression of a "swap," Shultz could only respond, "I suppose so." None of the arrangements that were recited in order to focus attention elsewhere—the release of Yuri Orlov and his wife from Soviet custody, the on-and-off-again expulsion of Soviet "diplomats" in New York, the hasty scheduling of the meeting in Reykjavik—could erase the significance of the Daniloff exchange for the policy against terrorism at large.

Blatant as it was, however, the Daniloff episode only captured in miniature an incoherence which had threatened to dissolve the terrorism policy all along. A central tenet of that policy, after all, had been that terrorism was directed against the democracies by their common enemies. Shultz himself had spelled out the implications of this view precisely: "If freedom and democracy are the targets of terrorism, it is clear that totalitarianism is its ally. . . . [W]hen the Soviet Union and its clients provide financial, logistic, and training support for terrorists worldwide . . . they hope to shake the West's self-confidence and sap its will to resist aggression and intimidation." Nor was there ambiguity about the Soviets' ultimate intent: "They connive with terrorist groups when they think it serves their own purposes, and the goal is always the same: to weaken liberal democracy and undermine world stability."

The more the United States pursued an arms agreement with the Soviets, the more the very foundations of its position against terrorism eroded. It was difficult to reiterate the manifold arguments against negotiating with terrorists while

conducting a four-point agenda of negotiations with a power identified as one of terrorism's chief sponsors. It challenged credibility to oppose making deals for individual hostages while dealing with the Soviets not only for Daniloff, but for the endless supply of domestic hostages available to that regime in the form of dissidents, refuseniks, and other persecuted individuals. To render these policies compatible was to square the circle. The President and his advisers had a decision to make; in effect, if not by design, with the prospects for an INF accord and a meeting in Reykjavik dangling, they made it.

The lingering demise of the terrorism policy and the momentum of arms control fueled each other. The more humiliation they endured through revelations of the attempted deal with Iran, the more officials turned to arms control, both to shift the public agenda and to bolster the President's popularity at home. The more overtures they made to the Soviets, the more the premises of the terrorism policy disintegrated, inviting other violations to follow. By January 1987, Secretary Shultz could receive Oliver Tambo, the leader of the African National Congress, at the State Department—a man more clearly and publicly linked with terrorist activities than most of his counterparts in the Middle East. By then, few commentators even bothered to question the implication of Tambo's visit for the American position toward terrorism. Yet this move, like so many others the administration has made since centering its foreign policy on U.S.-Soviet agreements, would have been unthinkable in the heyday of Shultz's own adumbration of the terrorism policy. Thus did the policy on terrorism become a chief casualty of the press for an arms accord.

IN THE course of its overtures to the Soviets, therefore, the administration has sacrificed most of the momentum and many of the principles and initiatives that marked its early years. The consequences of that surrender must weigh heavily on any estimation of whether the Reagan presidency has, according to its own standard of success, made the world a safer place.

Within the foreign-affairs bureaucracy, the damage done to the very idea of an activist, anti-Communist foreign policy will prove severe. The loss of the Reagan agenda has appeared to vindicate the intellectual and bureaucratic power of the foreign-affairs establishment and to elevate to the level of statesmen the administration's most persistent critics. The career service is not, contrary to the claims of those most bruised by their experience of it, a political monolith. Biased as it is on the whole toward a passive view of American interests and power, the bureaucracy nevertheless includes, like any other American elite, representatives of the spectrum of political opinion. It also includes, as a majority, officers who believe and follow their creed of service regardless of their per-

sonal beliefs. The effect of the administration's reversal has been to penalize the efforts of those who have sought to break with established mores and to prosecute a more active foreign policy. The personal and political disincentives for such dissidence are now committed to bureaucratic memory.

Still, it is the costs to America abroad that remain most critical. The effective collapse of the administration's terrorism policy has revived agonizing questions of credibility and staying power in areas of the world where such doubts are most subversive of American interests. The establishment of a Soviet stronghold in Central America will indeed become, as officials predicted, a cancer to be removed by the President's successors at vastly greater human and material costs. The fate of anti-Communist resistance movements elsewhere remains more uncertain now than when the United States first sought to capitalize on them. The American failure to help any one of these movements press for genuine victory has been deleterious enough, if only from the standpoint of American strategic interest. But the wholly unnecessary collapse of official support into anonymous negotiations over "regional conflicts" has dealt a political blow that may prove mortal to some anti-Communist forces and at least crippling to others. The damage to the American moral claim of some two centuries' standing to being the

"well-wisher" of those seeking independence has been inestimable.

As against this surrendering of political and moral advantage, the American government has produced an agreement to remove its INF missiles from Europe and has held out the hope that a more sweeping accord may be signed before the President leaves office. To its assertion that the pursuit of these agreements has made the world safer, the following qualifications may be added. It is not safer for the people of Central America, now subject to the designs of a Soviet—and Sovietized—ally whose strength in men and materiel is greater today than it was when Ronald Reagan first took office. Nor is it safer for those Americans who will ultimately pay the price for the Reagan administration's abdication of American power in that region. It is not safer for our personnel abroad, who have seen the humiliations in Iran and elsewhere effectively vindicated by the collapse and disappearance from view of an American response to terrorist attack. It is not safer for the troops and civilians on the battlefields of the Brezhnev Doctrine, who are fighting, to the strategic advantage of the United States, against regimes whose strength outstrips theirs by egregious proportions. For the pursuit of Soviet expansion, however, and for the designs of others pledged to the bleeding and diminishing of the United States, it remains a safe enough place, even an inviting one.

Gorbachev Without Illusions

Alain Besançon

I *The Crisis*

IN ITS first three years under Mikhail Gorbachev the Soviet Union has passed through a period of crisis which began well before his advent to power and which shows no sign of ending. Of course one must be careful with this word "crisis." When I used it recently in the presence of the émigré intellectual Vladimir Bukovsky, he rejoined that the USSR has been in a state of crisis for the last seventy years. And this is perfectly true if what one has in mind is the economic, cultural, or even demographic development of the country. But in the strictly political sense, can one say that there is a new crisis, a crisis of power, in the Soviet Union?

The power of the Soviet regime has always been maintained by force and does not derive from the freely given consent of the citizenry. We might therefore say that the regime has indeed been in a permanent condition of crisis for most of its lifetime, ever since Lenin had to concede that Soviet society was not voluntarily constituting itself along socialist lines but was in fact resisting, with all its might, what he had ordained for it. But the Soviet state is so constructed as, precisely, to face down all manifestations of social resistance, and in this respect it has proved itself extraordinarily efficient. Indeed, it is just this capacity to endure and to prevail according to its own lights that now seems somewhat enfeebled, and which in my judgment warrants the use of the term crisis.

Not that Soviet civil society has scored any significant advances or that it finds itself in any position to challenge, let alone reverse, the power of the state. Far from it. Though not completely suppressed, each and every one of the natural groupings within society—be they social classes, religious denominations, professional societies, organized political groups, nationalist movements—is kept under surveillance, penetrated, and periodically broken up or purged of its most dangerous ele-

ments. There is thus little or no chance of the various strands coalescing in order to form a united front against the state.

In any case, the real crisis is to be found not in society but at the very heart of Soviet state power: the Communist party.

Two factors have contributed to the erosion of the party's position. The first is the decline of ideology (of which the Communist party is the official trustee, charged with the task of translating its precepts into practice). This ideology came into being as a system of belief, and those who perpetrated the 1917 Revolution did indeed believe in it. Up until the death of Stalin, and perhaps even up until the ouster of Khrushchev, many in the party still believed in it. No longer. The ideology still exists, to be sure, and indeed it enjoys a greater monopoly than ever. But not as a belief system; it is, rather, a language, an internalized mode of thought and behavior, a way of exercising power. For party members, it also serves as standing proof that they belong to the elite, while for all others who are compelled to mouth its slogans it serves as a living reminder that they belong among those who obey and submit.

But the question of whether anyone sincerely believes in this ideology is really irrelevant. It remains the language spoken on all public occasions and, among party members, in many private circumstances as well; and that is all there is to it.

The other factor is the decline of terror. Like ideology, terror too is still an operative force in Soviet life, where fear remains, as ever, a pervasive element. But old-style terror is no longer exercised against members of the party. Montesquieu once observed that in a true tyranny, the closer one approaches the top the greater the risk to one's own top. Such was certainly the case under Stalin. For many people, the risk was bearable only by dint of their fierce belief in the ideology, their devotion to "the cause." But ever since the execution of KGB head Lavrenti Beria in 1953, the greatest risk run by members of the Soviet ruling class has been disgrace.

Under these conditions what has been happening is that party members have tended to translate into material goods the precarious (and always revocable) benefits accruing to them as a result of their status. It is considered acceptable on Lenin-

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ist grounds—so Gorbachev has lately acknowledged in his book *Perestroika**—for the party elite (the *nomenklatura*) to enjoy such privileges as access to better hospitals, consumer merchandise, vacations, special schools, and the like. Little by little these emoluments have turned into perquisites held as of right, virtually hereditary: the children of the *nomenklatura* are better educated, and physically better cared for, than the general run of the citizenry, and in practice only the schools reserved for the offspring of the party elite lead on to the highest positions within the party.

The more the party has developed along these lines the more it has transformed itself into a caste. At the same time, however, members of the party have been regularly interacting with civilian society, as peddlers of influence and sellers of protection in exchange for money or goods beyond those allotted to them by virtue of their status. The more the party has developed along *these* lines the more it has come to resemble a ruling class.

Yet in fact (and despite what many experts contend), the Communist party is neither an elite caste nor a ruling class. The closest analogy—favored by Stalin himself—is, rather, to a sect or religious order whose influential presence is felt in every corner of society while it itself remains scrupulously aloof from society. Historically it has been just for the purpose of isolating its members from civil society, removing them from all the temptations entailed in transactions of mutual exchange, that the party has showered them with generous remuneration and special benefits.

The problem is that, to the degree that the ideology has lost its power to compel belief, and terror has diminished, it has become necessary to raise the wall of separation higher and higher. To counter the corrupting enticements on the outside, the value of the benefits has had to be increased—but unfortunately those benefits are corrupting in and of themselves, and the typical party member feels that he never has enough. The wall therefore becomes porous in any event.

AS IDEOLOGY has lost its sway, one single factor has come to form the ongoing basis of the party's legitimacy, unity, and solidarity—power. To state the matter as an aphorism: the party rules, therefore it is.

This is not meant to suggest that the party is unaware of the many threats to its rule. For one thing, as Gorbachev well knows, the economy is slipping from central control. In all the border areas of the Soviet Union gigantic mafias have been formed, made up of businessmen, local party representatives, legal fixers, and the constabulary. These preside over a rampant privatization of the economy. To cite just one case reported by the Soviet press, the Riabtsev "firm," with an annual turnover of six million rubles, supported a network of 60 enterprises able to sidestep the law by

bribing local officials (to the tune of 400,000 rubles a year). If a member of the firm nevertheless fell into the hands of the law, he enjoyed the highest protection and lacked for nothing while in prison. This example could be multiplied many times over; even in Moscow its like is hardly unknown.

The state sector is being emptied out, plundered by theft and embezzlement, and private entrepreneurs are virtually helping themselves to free materials and manpower. The "second economy" may have been tolerable to the extent that it could be strictly managed by the party; but it is no longer so managed. More serious still, party cadres themselves are sliding out from under central control, assuming the independent position of the businessman and representing outside economic interests. Some have even become art collectors, or patrons of artists, including artists not accredited by the canons of socialist realism.

These developments have progressed the farthest in the non-Russian republics. Central Asia and the Transcaucasus are effectively on their way to autonomy, albeit an autonomy still camouflaged by the fact of party direction. In Kazakhstan, a large proportion of the livestock has passed into private hands. Georgia and Armenia are run as self-contained units, far from the prying eyes of Moscow, and have developed a kind of national economy. Nationalist sentiment grows apace, fortified in the Asiatic republics by the resurgence of Islam, which is itself nourished in secret brotherhoods the state cannot penetrate. Sheltered by distance, the perimeter of the Soviet Union is discreetly extricating itself from Moscow's grip while being careful to preserve the outward forms of Communist behavior; only an upheaval at the center is wanting before claims might even be pressed for independent existence. In the meantime, a civil society is slowly taking shape in these areas, and little by little integrating the party into its fabric.

The progressive weakening of the old levers of social command has entailed a similar and consequent weakening of the power of intimidation at home and of aggressiveness abroad. For a while it was possible for the government to say, in effect: let the productivity of the non-military sectors of the economy—the factories, the *sovkhozes* (state farms), *kolkhozes* (collective farms)—lapse as it will into inefficiency and irremediable waste and fraud; let the standard of living fall below that of the underdeveloped countries of Latin America. None of this in itself would be a cause of concern to the government, for after all it never put wealth or popular well-being among its highest priorities. But this rotting away of the civilian sector of the economy threatens Soviet military strength in turn, and *that* is a matter of the deepest concern.

By concentrating on the military virtually all

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of its resources, all of its research-and-development efforts, the Soviet Union has succeeded in building an armed force that is competitive with that of its principal rival. But the huge arms build-up on which the Soviet Union embarked after 1964, and which still continues apace, has become technically unsustainable and politically risky. Technological and scientific resources no longer suffice to maintain a competition in which the necessary level of sophistication rises from year to year. In a land innocent of technological achievement (except in the military arena), without highways, without telephones, without the means of disseminating information, how is a modern army to be supported?

More: the "human factor" too is beginning to present problems. Decades of living under a regime of lies, and in unrelieved servitude, penury, and fear, have taken a profound toll. The ordinary Soviet citizen works little and badly, and his tendencies toward self-destruction are given abundant outlet in his addiction to alcohol and drugs. All his energies are directed toward procuring for himself the simplest material goods; the range of his concerns hardly extends beyond the narrow sphere of his own existence. With the progressive corruption and degradation of the Communist elites, he no longer even has models to look up to. The newspapers he reads all testify to the general rot. The postal system steadily worsens, the trains run ever more slowly, sanitary conditions deteriorate alarmingly. According to demographers, the Soviet Union is the only country in the world in which, because of poor nutrition and bad hygiene, average height is diminishing and life expectancy is shrinking. How is a decent army to be built out of soldiers who are ignorant, sickly, drunk, and thieving, and who refuse to show any initiative?

OF ALL this the Communist party and its bosses (to the degree that they are informed) are well aware. But what to do about it? Theoretically there are two possible lines of response.

The first is to return to a Stalinist form of government. To this end the initial step would be a grand purge of the party, a task for which no one any longer has either the will or the means. It would also be necessary to crack down everywhere, to smash the second economy completely, to institute a climate of terror. But that would be completely counterproductive. Stalin could stock the gulag and the industrial cities with peasant masses, and with this primitive human material build Soviet heavy industry and manufacture the relatively simple sorts of weaponry then in use. Today, breaking the second economy would be tantamount to breaking the first, which functions to the extent it does only by leaning on the systems of private exchange everywhere in place. Besides, with workers reduced as they have been to

the condition of a frightened herd, it would be impossible to conform to modern-day production and technology standards.

The second course of action would be to liquidate the regime as it were from the Right, to repudiate the official ideology and adopt instead what has come to be known as "national Bolshevism." The advantages would be immense. As Solzhenitsyn has argued, the main burden weighing on Soviet man is neither poverty nor oppression but the constant need somehow to pretend conformity with the lies of the reigning ideology, to keep one's back turned on the truths with which one's mind and conscience are assailed. Abandoning the ideology would lift this burden, and it would also allow the party at last to consolidate its privileges and transform itself into a true ruling class. Thus it could begin to administer the economy in a rational manner, without having to go through the absurd contortions engendered by allegiance to dogma. Military production would soar, state power would be reinforced.

But this route too is no longer practicable. The basis of the regime's legitimacy cannot be changed without causing a severe power vacuum: as in 1917, everything would be in danger of falling apart, and very quickly. Besides, what would constitute the new basis of legitimacy, if not Great Russian nationalism? That, however, would not suffice for a government meaning to hold on to all the territories which Leninism now includes under its dominion. The Soviet Union is after all not coterminous with the old Russian empire, and the territory under its control beyond the borders of that empire it holds only through the "right" conferred on it by ideology. A government constituted purely on a nationalist basis would immediately excite the ambitions of many more or less latent counternationalisms, and the new Russian empire would soon disintegrate.

The policy effectively followed in their day by Brezhnev, Andropov, and Chernenko consisted in navigating between these two extremes of neo-Stalinism and national Bolshevism. The monopoly of the ideology remained intact, while at the same time the old alliance between Bolshevism and Great Russian nationalism was tacitly preserved. Their position, a "centrist" one, reaped the advantages of each of the two other, impracticable courses of action—and also its disadvantages.

The domestic policies followed by these rulers were prudent and conservative. Conscious that the problems they faced were insoluble, they repudiated the daring schemes and dangerous visions of both a Stalin and a Khrushchev. They were content with keeping things from getting worse, a goal they essentially accomplished by disburdening themselves of bothersome elements in Soviet society; these they either allowed to emigrate or packed off to the gulag or to psychiatric hospitals. Simultaneously, beginning in the 70's and accel-

erating under Andropov, a new development occurred—the expansion and strengthening of the KGB.

This agency was by definition in the best position to collect information on the general disaster occurring in the country. The idea—first put into practice by Geidar Aliev in Azerbaijan—was to have the KGB serve as a kind of reservoir of incorruptibles, who would replace rotten Communist officials when and where necessary. It was a matter of rescuing the party by means of an elite nucleus of hard men capable of reestablishing Leninist norms and enforcing law and order. (Unlike in the Chicago of Eliot Ness, however, these “untouchables” were recruited from the ranks of the mafia itself; thus, having been once exposed to the temptations of public life, the KGB’s incorruptibles were soon at risk of being corrupted all over again.)

AS PASSIVE as they were in domestic policy, however, so were Brezhnev and his successors extremely active, even bold, in foreign policy, where the prospects for success were anyway much greater.

Never since October 1917 have Soviet armed forces been adequate to the grandeur of Soviet military ambition, and periodic failure has also bedeviled Soviet intelligence and espionage activities. By contrast, in two areas Soviet policy has been an unmitigated success: in the conduct of diplomacy and in the manipulation of Western opinion. This is not due to the inferiority of Western diplomats or journalists, but to a simple built-in disadvantage from which they necessarily suffer, namely, the habits of traditional diplomacy and the habits of traditional journalism. Applying these habits of mind and action to so radically different a political phenomenon as the Soviet Union inevitably causes a kind of breakdown of the machinery.

From the moment Western diplomacy recognized the Soviet regime *de jure*, it conceded the premise that the Soviet Union was a state like any other, a state with which normal, peaceful relations could and should obtain. As the French President François Mitterrand declared to *Izvestia* just this past December, “The USSR is not our enemy, and not even our adversary.” With such a state, diplomacy must tirelessly seek to define areas of common interest and locate grounds for political accommodation. By the same logic it is forbidden for others to adopt a global strategy aimed at destabilizing or undoing the Soviet regime—in other words, to adopt a strategy like the one the Soviet regime directs against the West.

As for the press, the moment it comes to deal with the Soviet Union it too accepts as a working assumption the proposition that West and East are symmetrical: that there exist in the Kremlin, as in London or Paris or especially Washington, diverse currents of thought, “hawks” and “doves”;

that everything in Soviet politics boils down to a question of individuals and of personality (for so it often does among us in the West); that something is always about to happen in the USSR, even when nothing is happening; that the country is going to change, is on the verge of changing, has already changed.

Under Brezhnev, and especially after 1975, the Soviet government undertook to educate itself more systematically about these spontaneous Western tendencies and rapidly became more adroit at exploiting them. Its efforts in this regard had two objectives.

First, to obtain Western subsidies. The “Great Grain Robbery” of 1972 demonstrated that it was more to the Soviet Union’s advantage to buy American wheat with the money lent to it by American taxpayers than to invest pointlessly in Soviet agriculture. Within a few years the Soviet bloc had received more than \$100 billion in credit, a sum nearly equivalent to the entire Marshall Plan. The legal and illegal procuring of Western technology has represented a boon of no lesser value. The sums involved are in neither case truly colossal, but they impart a decisive boost “at the margin.” Insofar as the entire Soviet system is geared toward the military, the effect has been to enable Soviet armed forces to remain competitive.

Second, to extend the sphere of Communist domination. Within the space of a very few years in the 1970’s Vietnam, Laos, Cambodia, Nicaragua, Ethiopia, South Yemen, Mozambique, and Angola fell under Communist rule. The use of Cuban troops for these purposes was a remarkably innovative tool. Afghanistan offered the Soviet military a proving ground for its weapons and tactics.

In all, the extension of Communist rule has had the excellent result of instilling despair in those already under the yoke, like the Czechs and the Cubans, while, at the same time, reinforcing at home the seventy-year-old alliance between Bolshevism and Russian nationalism. The average Russian feels proud to belong to such a great power. As the Marquis de Custine put it more than a century ago, “The slave on his knees dreams of world empire.”

The balance-sheet of Brezhnev’s foreign policy was therefore a brilliant one, and in *Perestroika* Gorbachev accords it a due measure of respect. Domestically, however, the rot continued, and it became increasingly clear as time went on that the political effects, though not yet openly manifest, could burst out at any moment. That is where things stood when Gorbachev was elected General Secretary of the Communist party.

II Gorbachev’s Domestic Policy

IN THE YEARS immediately preceding Gorbachev’s accession to power, Soviet authorities had taken the measure of the internal

crisis. The alarm was probably raised by the KGB, with its abundant access to information, and by the army, chafing under its inability to perform in accordance with its sense of mission. The authorities had also taken the measure of the needed remedies, which amounted, as we have seen, to gleaning what was possible from foreign-policy initiatives while attempting to regenerate the party with the help of its least corrupted elements. This explains the ease of the post-Brezhnev successions: there was consensus within the Kremlin that "something had to be done." The person best placed to do it was Andropov, and after him Gorbachev.

In a number of respects the task facing Gorbachev upon his accession resembled that facing Stalin at the beginning of the 1930's. Stalin of course had to deal with an actual military threat in the form of Nazi Germany. To do so successfully, and to avoid falling into a position of the most dangerous inferiority, it was urgent that he assert absolute control over the machinery both of political power (hence the purges of the Great Terror) and of economic power (hence industrialization).

Gorbachev in 1985 was in nothing like so perilous a position externally; no one was dreaming of attacking the USSR or of trying to finish off the Communist regime. But it was plain that the general Communist offensive against "imperialism," which in 1975 seemed on the eve of triumph (as Brezhnev said in his secret speech on the day after the fall of Saigon), was coming upon rough times. The international "correlation of forces" was no longer so favorable. The Western powers had reacted to the oil shock of the 70's by launching a veritable new industrial revolution, itself resting on technological breakthroughs whose consequences were to create a new and possibly unbridgeable gap between the Western and Communist countries. In Ronald Reagan, the United States appeared to have found a President capable of healing the "Vietnam syndrome" and of restoring the nation's political will. The Grenada episode resonated loudly in Moscow, more loudly than in Washington, for it marked the first time a sovereign Communist government (however tiny) had been overthrown.

The necessary task was therefore all laid out: to take the machinery of state in hand, to reabsorb the second economy and revitalize the official one, to reestablish the authority of the center, to rally the morale of the populace and put it back to work. It was Stalin's program, but it would have to be implemented without the political means at Stalin's disposition. Hence the very large element of theater in everything Gorbachev has undertaken to do.

In the fashion of more than one newly promoted General Secretary before him, Gorbachev set the stage by blaming everything bad on the policies of his predecessor(s). Thus did Khrush-

chev do in condemning the crimes of Stalin, and Brezhnev in condemning Khrushchev. Gorbachev took care to emphasize, however, that his criticisms were aimed not at the Communist system but at certain faults of implementation that were perfectly reparable with the proper will. He conducted a modest purge (again like his predecessors at the beginnings of their terms) and like them he gathered a group around him with whose past careers he was familiar and the range of whose ambitions he thought he knew. Withal, he ostentatiously took it upon himself to defend the whole of Soviet history, including that Stalinist test case, the collectivization of agriculture, a policy that cost upward of 15 million dead. In this he hardly went further in both directions than his predecessors: for him, Trotsky and Bukharin would define the outer limits of Bolshevik legitimacy; Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev the inner.

A SINGLE word serves as Gorbachev's slogan, and in its Russian form it has become world-famous: *perestroika*. What does it mean? Gorbachev himself has offered several definitions: "overcoming stagnation," "mass initiative," "democracy," "all-round intensification of the Soviet economy," "a resolute shift to scientific methods," "priority development of the social sphere," "the elimination from society of the distortions of socialist ethics," etc. His objective, he says further, is "to revive the Leninist concept of socialist construction both in theory and practice." Put differently, *perestroika* signifies nothing other than a Leninism, or Soviet Communism, that includes within its self-definition (if not in practice) the initiative of the masses, democracy, economic enterprise, etc.

So why use the term *perestroika* at all? The word functions as a kind of fetish, a magic formula whose meaning is purposely vague and whose true significance is that given it by the party, that is to say by the General Secretary. What Gorbachev and the party decide is *perestroika*. Consequently, the task of every Communist and of every Soviet citizen is to pledge public allegiance to *perestroika*, and so they do, every day, in innumerable articles, speeches, public meetings, resolutions. Above all, everyone stands afraid of being accused by his neighbor of only pretending to be for *perestroika* while secretly working to subvert it.

Perestroika is not a thing, or even a movement; it is adherence to what the party says. In an interview in *Literaturnaya Gazeta*, the French Communist Georges Soria declares: "Those in the West who demand to see evidence of *perestroika* in the Soviet Union are either fools or provocateurs." One must simply believe in it, or appear to believe in it. *Perestroika* is an exhortation, an adjuration, an incantation. Those who respond to the call have the right, themselves, to be heard, over the heads of those who are trying to curb its

forward progress: that is what Gorbachev understands by *democracy*. In his book he cites a letter written to him by a worker:

Thank you. . . . You have cured us of civic passivity and indifference and have taught us to believe in our own powers, in justice and in democracy. . . . Many people didn't use to take Central Committee Plenary Meetings or even party congresses seriously. Now even my seven-year-old son yells to me whenever he sees you on television: "Daddy, come quick, Gorbachev's speaking."

This worker, in manifesting his enthusiasm, in reclaiming the *right* to be enthusiastic, has achieved democracy, Gorbachev-style.

ANOTHER emblematic word associated with *perestroika*, and likewise world-famous, is *glasnost*. Moscow has seen to its translation into the principal non-Russian languages as *transparence*, *apertura*, *openness*, etc. Its meaning is similarly indefinite, its functions many.

The first function is to implant in people's minds the belief that things are really changing, that the time has come to get to work, that henceforward one will be rewarded in accordance with one's effort, and that thieves and shirkers will be punished. *Glasnost* is intended to inspire confidence in the regime, to make people forget its duplicities. If confidence can be restored, the party might at last hope to overcome the divided habits of mind and speech by means of which Soviet citizens evade its grip. *Glasnost* thus aims at manipulating the erstwhile reflex of justice and the common good to entice the individual back under the discipline of the party.

A second function is to broadcast the right of all, or rather the duty of all, to criticize the enemies of *perestroika*, and in the first instance those cadres still loyal to Brezhnev or insufficiently loyal to Gorbachev. *Glasnost* is institutionalized squealing. As such it is particularly encouraged in the various border republics for the purpose of breaking up the local mafias.

A third function is to turn the Western media into an instrument of Soviet propaganda *at home*, where that propaganda is by and large not believed. Now, under the flag of *glasnost*, Western correspondents in Moscow are inundated with planted rumors, sensational happenings, newsbreaks of all kinds, which, duly transmitted to Western papers and radios, are then reimported into the Soviet Union with their credibility heightened. This is why Gorbachev has stopped jamming certain "enemy" radio services: they have become partial accessories to Soviet disinformation within the Communist bloc.

But whatever else it is, *glasnost* is not freedom of information. Its themes are imposed from above. Gorbachev himself has enunciated the main principle: "Criticism must always be conducted in the spirit of the party." As for the

"power of the press," that, too, as *Pravda* insists, "is exercised according to the direction of the party."

The catchwords *perestroika* and *glasnost* are aimed at dramatizing the form, and disguising the content, of measures already effectively taken. In the case of each, one discerns a strengthening of the role of the party.

In the area of the economy, the state has indeed been taking the "second" or parallel economy in hand. The regulation against illegal sources of income has had the result of draining the markets but even more strikingly of authorizing a vast repression. One reads in *Literaturnaya Gazeta* (December 3, 1986) of 800,000 employees who have been arrested or have absconded for fear of arrest. In the campaign against alcoholism, charges were brought against another 130,000 individuals (*ibid.*, March 18, 1987). Laws governing private enterprise seem to be aimed at channeling some of the hitherto inactive into the workplace: retirees, housewives, college and high-school students. Child labor is especially affected by statutes on "education for work" and on the "self-financing" of orphanages.

Gorbachev wants to use to the maximum all the manpower reserves he can locate. But he does not envision paying them overmuch. A state commission set up to control the quality of production—one could not expect this task to be left to the forces of competition or to consumer choice—holds businesses responsible for shoddy goods; businesses in turn hold the workers responsible, which means cutting their pay even if (as they can correctly allege) the poor quality of their manufacture is owing to the raw materials furnished by the state or to inadequate manufacturing equipment. With this new commission, which goes by the name of *Gospriemka*, we thus have the addition of one more bureaucratic cog, and another instrument for keeping wages low.

"Social justice," another slogan that makes frequent appearances in Gorbachev's discourse, means annulling the advantages enjoyed by people employed in or profiting from the second economy. Benefits are to be restored to people occupying slots in the party hierarchy, excluding those who have been exploiting their positions in order to enrich themselves. "Preoccupied with economic tasks, a good number of cadres had relaxed their vigilance on political questions," declared Gorbachev at the January 1987 party plenum; he was talking about the local party mafiosi, warning them to shun further corruption; he was also inviting the "masses" to lodge complaints against the local party machinery, with the approval of the center and under the justification of *glasnost*.

Something on the order of 200,000 party cadres were prosecuted in 1986, and death sentences for economic infractions are multiplying. Individual party members are being speedily retired from the economic sphere, and here again Gorbachev is

relying for help on those insulated from profit (low-level workers, retirees, certain categories of intellectuals), who have been invited to denounce the most corrupt. That is the sum and substance of the new "democratization," and of some other easily manipulated procedures like the "secret ballot" and "multiple candidacies."

Gorbachev, in short, does not attack the party; with its consent he is applying rough medicine to save and restore its authority.

AS WE shall see, all these measures have been ineffectual. First, though, it is worth looking at the one area in which Gorbachev's domestic policy has scored a great success: the conquest of the intellectuals.

Under Brezhnev, the Soviet intelligentsia lost to exile or the psychiatric gulag many of its dissident elements—which is to say its most brilliant members. What remained was an intelligentsia decapitated, exhausted by twenty years of semi-opposition, compromised by twenty years of semi-submission. Gorbachev, however, was in need of this group. He had to ensure that, unlike what happened in Poland, these people would not join the popular opposition and give it a voice; on the contrary, he meant to keep them isolated and even devalued in the eyes of the populace. But he also needed increased intellectual and especially scientific activity, and he could hardly repeat the obscurantist "pogroms" of Stalin, symbolized by the Lysenko affair. He needed the intelligentsia to serve as highbrow spokesmen for his political ideas and to applaud his innovations. He also needed them, or rather the moral authority and the prestige they enjoyed in Europe and the United States, for his foreign policy: to seduce and possess them would be to acquire a precious advocate vis-à-vis the West. But one would have to be subtle about it, and noncoercive. Thus, if one were stepping up anti-religious propaganda, it would be positively valuable to have the poet Yevgeny Yevtushenko praising the cultural riches of the Bible. If Russification were being imposed, how useful for the intellectuals to be spontaneously mourning the decline of national languages. Dissonance camouflages the true situation much more effectively than the wonted uniformity of yesteryear, which fooled no one.

Seducing the intellectuals cost Gorbachev very little. He improved their material conditions and threw them a few symbolic gifts: a Pasternak museum, the issuing of a number of books by authors long dead, the restoration of some historic monuments. In return for these pittance today's Soviet intellectuals content themselves by and large with speaking out on patriotic themes, or about the environment, or about the condition of Soviet morals, and they scrupulously avoid questioning the political system. The intelligentsia has thus been relegated to a kind of moral *sharashka** where it cannot jeopardize the regime but can

render it important service. (The case of Sakharov is more complex and should not be confused with that of the others.)

But the intellectuals are the exception; elsewhere things have not gone nearly so smoothly. Thus, in the campaign to repress autonomous groupings within the party and to cut down the local mafias, Gorbachev has collided with local nationalisms. Although purges were conducted without untoward incident in Uzbekistan and Georgia, this does not mean that everyone in those republics has knuckled under to the new order. In Kazakhstan there was serious trouble, in Lithuania and lately Armenia, impressive demonstrations. The Ukrainian potentate Vladimir Shcherbitsky, whose fall from power was once confidently predicted, is still there. This resistance has obliged Gorbachev to move cautiously. The trend seems to be to rely on the Russian people, and on the worst sort of Russian nationalism, as expressed for example by the anti-Semitic *Pamyat* group.

As for Soviet Jews, the verdict so far is mixed. The Soviet government has long understood that it can be costly to rouse the emotions of Western Jews, and in this regard it has tried to erase the unfortunate impression left by Stalin, Khrushchev, and Brezhnev. That is why it is permitting a few of the most notorious "refuseniks" to leave, those who have attracted the greatest media attention. The regime also encourages the hope that the doors will soon open wider, even though there is simply no question of giving passports to all 400,000 who are said to have applied. These days Moscow is actually capable of turning on the charm, for instance by mounting an exhibition of the works of Marc Chagall. Behind such moves there probably lurks the recognition that continued persecution of Jews, who despite everything still play an important role in the economic, technological, and scientific life of the country, may accelerate the decline of Soviet power. The regime therefore has an objective interest in striking a compromise that will win over at least a portion of Soviet Jews to its side.

Some such calculation, at any rate, explains why, on the one hand, the "anti-Zionism" campaign has not in the least abated, anti-Semitic writings are widely distributed (including *The Protocols of the Elders of Zion*), and *Pamyat* operates in a way that recalls the worst traditions of the Black Hundreds, while—on the other hand—the Soviet state, which is surreptitiously stirring up all this muck, poses simultaneously as the great protector of the Jews. Gorbachev wants to force the Jews to seek refuge under the wings of the state. That would yield an international benefit, allowing him to present himself at the bar of Western opinion as a modern, rational statesman

* A prison like the one described in Solzhenitsyn's novel *The First Circle*, housing scientists whose forced labor takes the form of research on projects useful to the state—Ed.

confidently braving the bigotry of native Russians and Ukrainians. And the fact is that the maneuver has worked, at least to a degree. Some Jews have indeed been taken in, and believe that Gorbachev will not only let large numbers leave but will assure the future of those who remain.

III *Gorbachev's Foreign Policy*

THE columnist George Will has recently argued, in connection with the new round of arms-control treaties now being negotiated between the U.S. and the USSR, that either the Soviets have really renounced the Leninist intention of imposing their rule on the entire planet, in which case the treaties are not needed, or they have not, in which case the treaties must be viewed as but a tactic in their ongoing global strategy.

Actually all one need do is to open the pages of Gorbachev's book *Perestroika* to see that he has preserved intact the Leninist vision. According to this conception the world today remains divided, as it has always been, into two "camps," that of the "imperialists," which represents the past, and that of "socialism," representing the future. The Third World is a disputed area between the two camps.

Gorbachev, who was born in 1931, has experienced only the international successes of the Soviet camp: the victory over Nazi Germany, the Sovietization of Eastern Europe, Communist triumphs in Asia, Africa, Central America. He has also seen the long-term weaknesses and confusion of the West and its inability (despite temporary aberrations, as under the early Reagan) to construct a coherent strategy. Gorbachev thus has no reason to disown the glorious heritage of Brezhnev, and he does not disown it. For three years now we have been able to observe his behavior in foreign policy: it is more activist, daring, and imaginative than that of his predecessor. The global strategy remains the same, but the tactics have been improved.

The strategy implies a designated principal enemy. The United States is, as ever, it. The strategic locale where victory will be decided is, as ever, Western Europe. The objectives are to decouple Germany from Europe, and Europe from America, and to impose a protectorate over Western Europe that will render it subservient to the Communist bloc. At the same time, however, Gorbachev has introduced important tactical changes which have led some in the West to believe—such, indeed, was the intent—that he has altered the strategy.

Soviet military doctrine is now being deliberately oriented toward the non-nuclear. To many Soviet theorists, nuclear weapons since their inception have seemed a disagreeable infraction of the laws of history. They upset the natural "correlation of forces," by enabling any country

possessing them to resist destabilization and intimidation from without and to exercise a disproportionate influence in world affairs. Nuclear weaponry renders war uncertain and strategic calculation hazardous. By contrast, conventional warfare, particularly when it is conducted with modern, "smart" weapons, confirms the natural geostrategic advantages of the "socialist camp." Moreover, in conventional warfare of this kind one can better predict the flow of battle and calculate more precisely the relation of forces.

A number of military analyses appearing in 1986 and 1987 enable us to understand how the Soviet army views the next conflict. According to these studies, a third world war is a "probable" event, which could be sparked by almost any kind of local conflict. The "socialist camp" must prepare to enter hostilities under the best possible conditions. To this end it is necessary to relearn the lessons of the last world war, namely, the importance of the element of surprise, and the importance of preserving this element through a diplomacy that continuously stresses the themes of peace and the renunciation of violence. It is also necessary to remember the way in which, during the last war, the Soviet Union formed an "alliance with the capitalist nations" and with their aid was able to triumph over the common adversary. This means that in the coming war the USSR is contemplating the possibility of counting on the neutrality if not the technical and economic assistance of several European countries, whether the "little states" of Scandinavia and Benelux which it has been pushing toward neutralism or, indeed, Germany itself.

None of this means that Gorbachev has appointed the hour and is even now readying against Europe his version of Hitler's Operation Barbarossa. Certainly, however, the USSR is preparing for war—why else would it devote to this end most of its essential economic and technological resources, while being well aware that no one is thinking of attacking it? But, ever faithful to Lenin, the Soviets view war as an extension of policy—a policy which cannot succeed unless the escalation to war seems always a plausible recourse.

Gorbachev understood from the beginning that the ceaseless accumulation of nuclear weapons was leading to an impasse. An arms race with the United States could not be won, at least so long as the latter was determined to keep up its end. To the contrary, such a race only served to expose the deepening technological and economic inferiority of the USSR. Making profitable use of his supreme diplomatic advantages, Gorbachev in effect opened a new front, translating into the military sphere the reasoning that had succeeded so well in the "Great Grain Robbery." Instead of investing heavily and fruitlessly in nuclear weaponry, why not try to disarm the adversary, or at least render problematic his continued reliance

on the arms he already has? Gorbachev thus accepted the "zero option" the Americans had offered in 1981 as a sop to European opinion.

ONCE the INF treaty is ratified and the theater weapons are out of Europe, the next phase will consist of isolating the United Kingdom and France by rallying pacifist opinion in Western Europe against these countries' continued retention of nuclear arsenals. Then, once Europe has been rid of nuclear weapons, and once the American troops are gone—for without nuclear cover, how long would American public opinion abide their remaining?—it should be easy to brandish the Soviet strategic nuclear threat as a means of deterring the United States from even thinking of intervening in Europe in the event of conflict.

From that point forward, the only way to defend Europe will be with a conventional army capable of offsetting the hugely superior Warsaw Pact forces. Building such an army presupposes an unlikely degree of political will, all the more unlikely in view of the intense pacifist sentiments that will already have solidified behind the drive for nuclear disarmament, and the by now widely implanted belief in the peaceful intentions of the Soviet Union. At that point, and under conditions dictated by Moscow, Europe will find itself in the position of placing its economy and technology at the service of the long-range survival of the Soviet Union—which, as we have seen, is precisely the principal aim of Soviet foreign policy.

In preparation for this eventuality the Soviets have been deploying a number of stratagems, some of them predating Gorbachev.

One is the effort to endow the Soviet Union with an image that differs from reality. In fact the USSR has been disguising both its Leninist nature and its global aims since the New Economic Policy of 1921. In the 20's it strove to create the impression of a maturing revolution, something along the lines of the normalization of France after Thermidor. In the 30's it presented itself as a country bent principally on industrialization, modernization, and development. (Gorbachev has resurrected this particular image.) During the war, it emerged as Eternal Russia, defending an age-old identity and way of life which only happened to be encased for the moment in the skin of Communism.

In 1975, when Georgi Arbatov was sent to Washington to press the Soviet position on SALT II and the Helsinki accords, he portrayed a USSR that was now a superpower perfectly and symmetrically matched with the United States by reason of global responsibilities, spheres of influence, legitimate interests—and also by reason of an internal political life as variegated and diverse in its way as America's own. This new image was "sold" not to those who were once the officially des-

ignated Western consumers of the Soviet myth, the working classes and the intelligentsia, but to businessmen, diplomats, experts on Soviet affairs. It was in fact Western Sovietologists, especially the Americans among them, who marketed the new doctrine of political (not to say moral) equivalence in its most sophisticated and elegant form, and who in turn made it credible to Western politicians.

THANKS to its new image, which implied among other things a sound financial reliability, the USSR was able to participate actively in international capital markets. By now the actual debt incurred by the seven nations of the Eastern bloc has reached \$127 billion, a jump of 55 percent in the last three years alone. To this may be added the secret credits that pass through Soviet financial institutions located in London and Paris. Agricultural surplus of the European Common Market is bought at a tenth what it costs the Europeans to produce, with the difference made up by the European taxpayer. The USSR is lobbying for membership in the International Monetary Fund and the World Bank. It is conducting "joint ventures" with German and Japanese investors, taking care to maintain control of the enterprises so created. Having nothing of its own to sell but weapons, gold, and oil, commodities not in overwhelming demand just now, the Soviet Union is endeavoring by political means to manipulate the terms by which international trade is conducted.

The Communist movement worldwide has been assigned its part in this grand design. The fact of this movement's existence, while not exactly denied, is hardly stressed these days, and its centralized direction is carefully dissembled. Still, the essential structure of the movement remains what it has always been, and in its new director, the former long-time Soviet ambassador to the U.S., Anatoly Dobrynin, it has found a man of considerable worldly experience.

In Western Europe, with the exception of Italy, the movement seems to have abandoned the effort to form mass-based parties; operating out of conspiratorial structures reminiscent of the early days of Bolshevism, it is content instead with small, tightly disciplined organizations that aim to seize control of a few key sectors (in France these include the electrical and railway workers, the ports, a number of municipalities). These narrowly based efforts can be counted on to engage the sympathies and the collusion of some within the more broadly structured social-democratic parties—such, for instance, has been the successful experience of the small Communist party in West Germany.

The grand design for Europe renders subordinate the other theaters of Soviet foreign policy. But those theaters have hardly been abandoned, even if, globally speaking, the USSR may be in

need of a pause. In *Perestroika* Gorbachev declares his intention to be active in Asia, and the Soviet navy has for quite some time now been pushing methodically forward in the South Pacific. In Angola the annual offensives continue, striving to put an end once and for all to the rebellion led by Jonas Savimbi. Ethiopia, wrapped in its new constitution even as the Ethiopian people are wrapped in starvation, has won entry to the sacred rolls of "people's democracies." In Nicaragua, the Sandinistas with Soviet assistance are building an enormous offensive army. Soviet troops have not been withdrawn from Afghanistan, and will not be withdrawn until the political victory for which they were sent to fight has been secured.

In all this Gorbachev's only original contribution has been to persuade the West that the Soviet Union intervenes so far from its borders as a matter of self-defense; that he, Gorbachev, bitterly regrets these engagements; and that it is therefore incumbent upon the Western democracies, if they desire peace as intensely as he does, to help him achieve the undisturbed political dominion at home which will permit him to work for their mutual and common good. That he has indeed largely succeeded in thus persuading the West is testimony to the progress the USSR and the Communist movement have lately made in their understanding of, and hence their ability to manipulate, public opinion in the democracies. Where once upon a time they were hampered by Leninist ideology with its preordained "class analysis" of democratic institutions, today, no doubt owing in good part to the labors of specialized agencies like Arbatov's Institute of the USA and Canada, the Soviets have developed a much better feel for the internal workings of democratic polities. If one may put it this way, they have passed from Lenin to Tocqueville, and the realism thus gained has given them a handle on the intrinsic weaknesses of our way of life.

IV *The Crisis (Again)*

WHAT are Gorbachev's prospects? Is there any chance he can overcome the Soviet crisis—that is, the threatened loss of global power and of Communist party authority?

To address the domestic scene first: Gorbachev's entire career suggests that he is doing the only thing he knows how to do, and it will not succeed. He is the complete apparatchik, a man who won his first stripes in the Komsomol and then served a long apprenticeship in the provinces where he tasted the pleasures of absolute power. Gorbachev found political mentors in the likes of Kulakov, Suslov, Andropov, and Brezhnev himself. Throughout this period he never distanced himself a whit from the positions of the party.

There is no reason to doubt Gorbachev's sin-

cerity in launching his campaigns of *perestroika* and *glasnost*. Something had to be done, and he is doing it, in conformity with the seven-decades-long practice of the Communist party. As in other reformist campaigns launched periodically by the party, what we see is essentially crackdown and centralization, aimed at recovering authority, combined with appeals to civic enthusiasm and exhortations to industriousness and honesty in the workplace. Gorbachev's campaign has benefited from the atmosphere of expectation that has accompanied the advent of a new and relatively young General Secretary, but substantially he is not doing much more than Brezhnev did in similar circumstances.

Nor can he undertake more so long as it remains out of bounds to tamper with the leading role and the absolute political monopoly of the party. A single example: the law on private enterprise published in *Pravda* on July 1, 1987. Here one needs to recall that the 1936 Soviet constitution, promulgated by Stalin and proclaimed "the most democratic the world has ever known," included an article (126, which in the present constitution has become Article 6), completely invalidating every other article of the same constitution on the grounds that "The party represents the leading nucleus of every organ of society." Last year's regulation states, similarly, that "The party apparatus in each enterprise, which is the political nucleus of the collective, directs the work of the collective, of the organs of autogestion [*sic*], of the syndicates, of the Komsomol, and of other organizations."

But—our Western experts will object—the law also foresees the election of boards of directors. True. And it also adds: "If the slate chosen by the workers' collective fails to win the approval of the superior authorities, new elections will be held."

And therein lies the contradiction. The 19th-century historian Vasily Klyuchevsky observed that "Peter the Great wanted the slave to remain a slave and also to act boldly and freely." Gorbachev wants Soviet man to engage with enthusiasm in the task assigned to him by the party. And perhaps he believes he will.

But he will not. Soviet man even now is resisting with all his might, marshaling every habitual resource of inertia and covert sabotage, looking elsewhere to find the means of providing for himself and his kin. The survival methods which Soviet citizens learned under Brezhnev are serving them still: the financial schemes, the well-constructed networks of pilferage, the arrangements for mutual benefit struck with local party functionaries. As Gorbachev progressively destroys this network, life will become more risky and difficult for everyone. In short, the vast economic reconstruction he has promised can only lead, as the average Soviet citizen knows, to utter chaos.

The government itself has foretold "difficult

years," a prophecy that will allow it to impute to the travails of *perestroika* the economic and social disaster it both dreads and is precipitating. But there are other strains as well. The nod Gorbachev has given to Great Russian nationalism will inevitably stiffen the opposition to his programs of the other nationalities. Those party cadres whose security and immunity have been compromised are already maneuvering to recapture the tranquil luxury they enjoyed under Brezhnev. The ignominious fashion in which Boris Yeltsin was condemned, forced to "confess" the error of his ways, and dismissed, shows the capacity of the apparatus to resist the least disturbing change.

After three years in power, Gorbachev already finds himself facing Brezhnev's impossible choices—as can be seen from his speech on the 70th anniversary of the Revolution (November 2, 1987). Neither a return to Stalinism nor a turn to right-wing national Bolshevism is a practicable solution.

So he is compelled to follow once again the *via media*, staving off collapse at the price of a relentless process of national immobilism.

Foreign policy once again offers a compensatory avenue of hope. Several times over in the course of its history the Soviet regime has tottered on the edge of collapse; each time, Western aid has come to the rescue and provided a new lease on life. In large part the entire thrust of Soviet foreign policy today is aimed at securing those means of survival which the West has hitherto afforded periodically and as if by miracle but which henceforth, perhaps, it may be persuaded to provide permanently and as if by obligation. A race is thus on between the continuing and deepening process of internal decomposition, whose aggravating symptoms, although masked today, must sooner or later burst into the open, and the so-far successful policy of external diplomacy which may yet procure a lengthy reprieve, if not, indeed, eventual triumph.

Bashing Toscanini

William H. Youngren

ARTURO TOSCANINI (1867-1957) was the most highly acclaimed conductor of his time, both in Europe and in this country. But there was always a grudging undercurrent of objection to him. Many critics simply (and perhaps understandably) found it hard to believe, or at least to acknowledge, that anyone could be that good, that anyone could really be the world's best in as tricky and rarefied a field as orchestral conducting. But Toscanini's character and the way he ordered his life also seemed to provide justification for these objections.

He guarded his privacy fiercely, he gave very few interviews, and aside from his anti-fascist pronouncements (made early and borne out by his actions), he did not hold forth publicly on music or any other topic—as many other prominent conductors did. Thus the legend grew that he was an uncultivated man who just happened to have a trick memory for scores and a phenomenal ear for orchestral sonority and balance—a sort of musical *idiot savant*.

This view also involved a certain ethnic snobbery. Most of Toscanini's greatest contemporaries among conductors—Hans Richter, Arthur Nikisch, Karl Muck, Gustav Mahler, Felix Weingartner, Bruno Walter, Wilhelm Furtwängler—were of German or Austrian (or at least Central European) descent. Since German and Austrian composers had written most of our greatest music of the last two centuries, many critics easily assumed that Toscanini, as a mere

Italian (and a lower-class Italian at that), lacked the cultural background necessary to put him in touch with this great tradition. Italian composers, on the other hand, had excelled mainly at opera, long patronized as an impure and somewhat inferior genre. Since Toscanini had got his start in the opera house rather than in the concert hall, it seemed natural to assume further that that was where he belonged, conducting Verdi and Puccini rather than attempting Haydn, Mozart, Beethoven, Brahms, or even Wagner, who had pointedly set himself apart from operatic tradition.

These assumptions could not have gained currency so easily if Toscanini had made more recordings during the 1920's and 1930's. But he hated the whole process, which in 78-rpm days demanded that everything be recorded in four-minute snippets. His first records were made in 1920, at exactly the mid-point of his sixty-eight-year career, and he produced relatively few others until the tape era, which did not arrive until he was about eighty. Hence the vast majority of what were undeniably his greatest performances are lost to us forever.

Finally, there were the stories of Toscanini's colossal temper, his baton-smashing rages at rehearsals. These only served to heighten the image of him as an undisciplined and uncultured Italian peasant who had no business trying to plumb the profundities of the Germanic spirit. Moreover, many of these rages involved his insistence that the music be played exactly as the composer had written it. Tradition, he was fond of telling his various orchestras, is merely an-

other name for the last bad performance.

In the years since Toscanini's death, several fine books have appeared that expose the falsity of the various myths that surrounded him during his lifetime and bear out the simple truth that he was indeed the greatest conductor of our century. The late B. H. Haggin's *Conversations With Toscanini* (1959, 1979) and *The Toscanini Musicians Knew* (1967) are still the best introduction to the man and his work. Also valuable are *This Was Toscanini* (1963) by Samuel Antek, a violinist who played with the NBC Symphony during the seventeen years that Toscanini conducted it (1937-54), and Harvey Sachs's biography, *Toscanini* (1978).

Recently, however, a new round of Toscanini-bashing seems to have got under way. Its most important manifestation is Joseph Horowitz's *Understanding Toscanini*, published last year by Knopf and now issued in paperback.* Though it has been widely praised as exciting, adventurous, original, even brilliant, Horowitz's book is sloppily researched and haphazardly written, just a chic rehash of all the old myths from a new angle.

"My topic," Horowitz tells us at the outset, "is less Toscanini than the manner in which he was perceived, procured, appreciated, marketed, and used." Though he does acknowledge that "Toscanini can legitimately be called a 'great conductor,'" the Toscanini that interests Horowitz is Toscanini the (alleged) "high priest of the musical appreciation movement of the 30's and 40's." Now of course it is true that from the time Toscanini first came to the Metropolitan Opera in 1908 to his retirement as conductor of the NBC Symphony in 1954, a great deal of very effective publicity—or "ballyhoo," to use a pet

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* University of Minnesota Press, 493 pp., \$12.95.

word of Horowitz's—was exerted to sell him, and with him classical music, to the American public. But surely one's final judgment of those efforts, and of Toscanini himself, must depend on the worth of the product that was being sold, the music that Toscanini performed, recorded, and, in later years, broadcast.

Not so, however, for Horowitz, who has been deeply influenced by the heavily theoretical Marxist writer Theodor Adorno. Toscanini was a particular *bête-noire* of Adorno's. In his little book *Minima Moralia* he wrote: "No work of art, no thought, has a chance of survival, unless it bear within it the repudiation of false riches and high-class production, of color films and television, millionaire's magazines and Toscanini." Any attempt to teach "music appreciation" was to Adorno just one more weapon in the class war, one more method of further enslaving the puppets of capital by turning them into a narcotized captive audience, consumers of yet another mass opiate. Disseminated to a mass audience, even (or perhaps especially) the greatest music inevitably becomes "fetishized," degraded to mere entertainment, a commodity packaged by the ruling class to distract the masses from "the problematic social conditions that cause the individual to seek satisfaction beyond immediate social reality, which denies him this satisfaction." Not surprisingly, radio, through which Toscanini reached his largest audience, was for Adorno the villain of villains.

HOROWITZ's account of Toscanini's three American careers—at the Metropolitan Opera (1908-15), the New York Philharmonic (1926-36), and the NBC Symphony (1937-54)—is disfigured by just the sort of innuendoes and distortions of fact that one would expect from an admirer of Adorno.

Much given to crude dialectical oppositions, Horowitz focuses his treatment of the Met years on Toscanini's rivalry with Mahler, and that of the Philharmonic years on his rivalry with Furtwängler, who came to the Philharmonic as guest conductor for three seasons, in 1925-

27. "Mahler, the pariah, was manic, morbid, insecure. . . . Toscanini was rooted, iron-willed, indestructible." And similarly with Toscanini and Furtwängler: "The Italian was short, compact, decisive. The German was tall, gangly, visionary. . . . Furtwängler . . . radiated uplift. Toscanini demanded maximum polish and efficiency." All the old, long-discredited rumors are dredged up yet again, in an attempt to prove that Toscanini, who "tolerated no rivals," "routed" Mahler from the Met, and was somehow also responsible for Furtwängler's not being invited back to the Philharmonic for the 1927-28 season.

Yet when Toscanini left the Philharmonic in 1936, he nominated Furtwängler to be his successor. By that time, with the Nazis in power, the political differences between the two men had become very sharp, and would surely have aggravated any personal or musical rivalry Toscanini had earlier had with Furtwängler. Rather than speaking out against fascism or refusing to conduct in Hitler's Germany, as Toscanini had done, Furtwängler for the most part remained silent and played the game. Though he never joined the Nazi party, he allowed himself to be made a member of the Reich Music Chamber and a Prussian Councillor of State. Yet of the two men's diametrically opposed attitudes toward Nazism, Horowitz, astonishingly, says only that "Furtwängler's response was more concealed, less concise than Toscanini's." Though Horowitz cannot quite bring himself to blame Toscanini for Furtwängler's failure to receive the Philharmonic appointment, he does blame "the Toscanini cult," and he complains, again astonishingly, that "Toscanini never saw fit to speak up for Furtwängler's candidacy"—even though it had been Toscanini's idea in the first place! What he does not bother to mention is that Goebbels told Furtwängler that if he accepted the Philharmonic appointment, he would be barred from conducting in Germany.

Throughout these chapters, and even more in those dealing with Toscanini's years at NBC, which

had a more high-powered publicity apparatus than either the Met or the Philharmonic, Horowitz repeatedly suggests that Toscanini was in dark (though perhaps unconscious) collusion with his corporate masters. "Toscanini tolerated no stunts or press agents," he writes, "yet was inevitably a prime beneficiary of the growing public-relations mentality." And the mere fact that Toscanini's 231 NBC Symphony broadcasts were organized by one vast capitalist enterprise, NBC itself, and were sometimes commercially sponsored by various other such enterprises—General Motors, Socony Vacuum, Reynolds Metals—leads Horowitz to lump them indiscriminately together with other quite different commercially sponsored ventures:

To many a lay listener, who turned the radio dial to the NBC Symphony via "Your Hit Parade," "Death Valley Days," or "Saturday Night Serenade," and whose NBC Symphony recordings were shelved beside albums of Frank Sinatra and Benny Goodman, Toscanini's redundant Beethoven and Weber, Dvořák and Elgar were as instantly and effortlessly preoccupying as a drawn six-shooter at the movies or a three-and-two count, bases loaded, at the ball park.

And again: "*Life*, *The Good Housekeeping Guide to Musical Enjoyment*, . . . Bob Hope, *Reader's Digest* . . . —these were the elements articulating the meaning of Toscanini."

Of course this is all nonsense. It was Toscanini himself who articulated his meaning for his listeners, and though some of them may have come for the ballyhoo, those that stayed did so for the music. Horowitz cites with approval a passage from Adorno's and Max Horkheimer's *Dialectic of Enlightenment* in which, after adducing Toscanini as an example, they write: "The fusion of culture and entertainment that is taking place today leads . . . to a depravation of culture." But exactly what depravation or dilution or vulgarization of culture resulted from Toscanini's broadcasts, or from his many recordings, or from his earlier performances at the Met and the Phil-

harmonic? As one who listened both to Toscanini's broadcasts and to "Your Hit Parade," who bought both Toscanini and Benny Goodman records, and who frequented movie theaters and ball parks during the period in question, I can testify that I did not confuse these various sources of pleasure. The fact that Toscanini's performances came to me commercially sponsored and through a mechanical contrivance did not reduce me to what Adorno called "regressive listening" arrested at "the infantile stage," or deprive me of my "capacity for conscious perception of music." And I have no reason to think that my experience was unrepresentative.

HOROWITZ's real gripe against Toscanini turns out to be that he did not perform enough 20th-century music, particularly American 20th-century music. "No major conductor previous to Toscanini," he writes, "had been so divorced from the important music of his time." Thus it is Toscanini, his enthusiastic "cult" of followers, and his corporate sponsors who are to blame for the fact that today we find "no more than 25 percent of the active symphonic repertoire consisting of music composed since 1900." (In the later, endlessly drawn-out chapters of Horowitz's book, Toscanini also gets blamed for the alleged anonymity and impersonality of most present-day musical performance, the early burn-out of several promising young American pianists, the popularity of Luciano Pavarotti, and much more that there is no point in going into here.)

There are several things to be said in response. First, Toscanini was born in 1867, and the modern music of his formative years was composed by Wagner, Brahms, Debussy, and Richard Strauss, all of whom he championed vigorously in the face of opposition that it is now hard to recall ever existed. Anyhow, no artist has an obligation to perform music that he does not find congenial; his only obligation, to himself and to his public, is to perform the music that he does find congenial as well as he can. And it is worth noting that Toscanini made no effort to inter-

fere with the performances of 20th-century music he did not find congenial by such Philharmonic guest conductors as Erich Kleiber and Otto Klemperer or such NBC Symphony guest conductors as Leopold Stokowski and Ernest Ansermet.

Second, Horowitz himself cites some interesting statistics that undermine his argument. As early as 1865, he tells us, 76 percent of the repertoire of the Leipzig Gewandhaus Orchestra was made up of works by dead composers. And this was also true of the major orchestras of London, Paris, and Vienna. So it can scarcely have been Toscanini (or the hype surrounding him) who brought about the present-day focus on music of the past at orchestral concerts.

Third, Horowitz frequently speaks, as in one of the passages quoted earlier, of Toscanini's performances of "acknowledged masterpieces" as "redundant." But redundant to or for whom? Precisely what makes masterpieces masterpieces is that they are inexhaustible, and hence constantly require new performances to explore their wealth of suggestiveness. Many of Toscanini's most prominent colleagues, who had nothing whatever to gain by praising him (and besides had sizable egos of their own), made it clear that they learned from his performances of works that they themselves frequently performed. Stokowski, offered a free ticket to one of Toscanini's Philharmonic concerts, insisted on paying, saying "Everyone must pay to learn something." And Pierre Monteux spoke of a Toscanini concert as "a real revelation in the art of conducting and in the art of interpretation," and called him "the greatest of all." If the most gifted of Toscanini's contemporaries did not find his performances of standard repertoire "redundant," why should Horowitz do so? And why should he imply that ordinary music-lovers—had they not been narcotized by the publicity surrounding the performances—should have done so?

Finally, if the majority of the general public has continued to find a great deal of 20th-century music just as uncongenial as Toscanini found it, maybe that says

something about the music itself rather than about any supposed brainwashing of the public by the sinister forces of commercialism and reaction. As Horowitz perhaps unwittingly makes clear, a great deal of ballyhoo was also expended in trying to sell the public on 20th-century music; it has just not paid off very well.

Horowitz is too young to have known Toscanini, or even to have heard him conduct, but he does of course have access to Toscanini's recordings. Yet the long, pretentious chapter he devotes to them is no better than the sections of his book that deal with Toscanini's background and earlier career. The only two recorded performances that he singles out for high praise are of Verdi operas: the 1937 Salzburg *Falstaff* and the 1947 NBC *Otello*. (Neither is available just now, but the *Otello* will soon be issued on compact disc by RCA.) Like many others before him, Horowitz concludes that "Toscanini's art was based on the overt visceral energies of Verdian popular theater." Thus his performances of Wagner lack "inner space," and those of Beethoven are ambiguously characterized as "scorching Beethoven clean." Unlike Furtwängler and other German and Austrian conductors, who were steeped in something that Horowitz repeatedly and admiringly (but somewhat vaguely) refers to as "tradition," Toscanini "did not so much discard tradition as disdain ever acquiring it." The style of all his later recorded performances "can be summarized in an all-purpose formula combining American urgency and efficiency with the theatrical *melos* of the Mediterranean." The unsurpassed precision of attack, sensitivity of nuance, plastic shaping of phrase, and subtle feeling for continuity of impulse that were so admired by the greatest of Toscanini's fellow-conductors—and that can be heard on many of even his last recordings—are dismissed by Horowitz as "smothering fetishism," the result of a fixation on "perfect execution" at the expense of "historic and poetic allusions."

THERE is no point in quarreling, this late in the day, with so crude

an oversimplification. It will be more helpful to mention some recent Toscanini issues that the reader can use for himself to test the truth of Horowitz's statements.

Two of the greatest performances of the NBC years, the 1940 Verdi *Requiem* and Beethoven *Missa Solemnis*, are now available on compact disc (in sets CD-240 and CD-259), from Music and Arts Programs of America, Inc., P.O. Box 771, Berkeley, California 94701. The sound is far better than on any previous LP issue. The same distributor can also provide compact discs of a splendid 1938 Beethoven "*Eroica*" (CD-264); performances from the 1940's of Mendelssohn's Symphonies Nos. 3 ("Scottish"), 4 ("Italian"), and 5 ("Reformation"), along with selections from the music for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* (CD-268); and a 1938 Beethoven Ninth (not yet in the catalogue but available sometime this spring).

The Swiss Relief label has issued a compact disc of fine 1939 performances of Beethoven's First and Fourth Symphonies with the NBC Symphony (CDCR 861) and an LP containing rare New York Philharmonic performances of Beethoven's Fourth and Fifth Symphonies, from 1936 and 1933 respectively (REL 821). And the Italian Fonit-Cetra label has issued on LP a set of Wagner excerpts from 1952-54 (DOC-17); Debussy's *La Mer*, *Ibéria*, and *Prelude to the Afternoon of a Faun* from 1953 (DOC-18); and the four Brahms Symphonies, together with his Haydn Variations and *Tragic Overture*, performed by the Philharmonia Orchestra in London in 1952 (DOC-52). (All of these recordings can also be ordered from Music and Arts Programs of America, Inc.)

A very important 1935 performance of Beethoven's Seventh with the BBC Symphony Orchestra, which has never been issued in any form before, is in the three-LP EMI Angel set IC-6156. The set also contains Toscanini's equally fine prewar BBC commercial recordings of Beethoven's First, Fourth, and Sixth ("*Pastorale*") Symphonies, along with the *Leonore* Overture No. 1 and a *Prometheus* Overture

that is also previously unissued. BBC performances of Debussy's *La Mer* and Elgar's *Enigma Variations*, also from 1935 and also previously unissued, are on English EMI EH-2913451 (which may be ordered from International Book & Record Distributors, 40-11 24th Street, Long Island City, New York 11101).

ALMOST all of these performances were recorded noncommercially from broadcast concerts. Therefore their sound varies a great deal. Except for one 1926 78-rpm record, all of Toscanini's commercial recordings were made for Victor and RCA Victor, and are thus the property of RCA. Many of his NBC Symphony recordings suffered from the dry acoustics of NBC's notorious Studio 8H, from which his broadcasts were made until the fall of 1950, when they were transferred to Carnegie Hall. Others, apparently with his permission, were artificially beefed up with added reverberation. In the years since Toscanini's death, RCA has continued to mishandle his recordings—a process scrupulously documented by Haggin in the two editions of *Conversations With Toscanini*.

The mishandling continues even today. A few years ago Japanese RCA issued ten Toscanini compact discs that were so bad that they were soon withdrawn and a second ten-disc series was canceled.* RCA in New York then announced that it would soon begin issuing its own Toscanini compact discs, and since it fully acknowledged the Japanese fiasco—for which indeed it was partially to blame—one expected better things. Yet the first two discs, of the Beethoven First and "*Eroica*" (RCD1-7197) and the Beethoven Second and Seventh (RCD1-7198), were, incredibly, disfigured not only by added reverberation but also by added stereo effect! This was also true, though to a lesser extent, of the next two discs issued, some Wagner excerpts (5751-2-RC) and some works by Berlioz (5755-2-RC).

The Beethoven performances, which date from 1949-51, are not so good as the ones of the same works mentioned earlier, but they are well worth having nonetheless.

The Wagner disc is notable for a 1941 concluding scene of Act I of *Die Walküre*, with Lauritz Melchior and Helen Traubel, and for the superb 1952 Prelude and *Liebestod* from *Tristan*; the Berlioz disc contains a fine 1953 *Harold in Italy*. In the best of all possible worlds, RCA would call in these flawed discs and remaster them; since that is not likely to happen, they should be purchased by anyone who wants to experience the plentiful "inner space" of Toscanini's Wagner and to see how he actually dealt with Beethoven in his later years.

The producer responsible for these four discs has now, happily, left RCA and been replaced by Arthur Fierro, an independent producer who worked with the Toscanini family in transferring their disc archives to tape. The four compact discs prepared under Fierro's supervision that have so far been issued are a great improvement over their predecessors. The magnificent 1952 Beethoven Ninth (5936-2-RC) and the fine 1951 Brahms Fourth (6216-2-RC) were both transferred to digital tape directly from the original master tapes, with nothing added and with no change in equalization. On both discs one hears the full, warm, lustrous sound of the pre-renovation Carnegie Hall.

The 1944 Beethoven C-Minor Piano Concerto, with Arthur Rubinstein as soloist, and the 1940 Beethoven Violin Concerto, with Jascha Heifetz (5756-2-RC), were both recorded in Studio 8H. While the former accurately reproduces its drier but by no means disagreeable sound, the latter seems to have had reverberation added. If so, it was not added by Fierro, who had to work from a tape prepared in 1975 for RCA's "Heifetz Collection." (And I should add that the producer who prepared that tape says he does not recall adding any reverberation.)

Finally, there is a disc of "Light Classics" (6205-2-RC). The sound is full, rich, and natural on all selections except a 1945 *Stars and Stripes*

* For details see my article, "The Toscanini Sound," in the February 1986 issue of the *Atlantic*.

Forever that has been made blowzy by the addition (though not by Fierro) of both reverberation and stereo. Outstanding are the thrilling 1953 Rossini *William Tell Overture* and the spacious, relaxed 1950 Smetana *Moldau*.

RCA has plans for a very extensive Toscanini reissue series on compact discs, which may later include some of the Philharmonic recordings from 1929 and 1936. If Arthur Fierro can only be permitted to remain at the controls, we may at last be seeing an end to the years of abuse to which Toscanini's recordings have been subjected by RCA.

IT MAY seem strange that I have bothered to note two and even three different Toscanini versions of the same piece. At one point Horowitz characterizes the comparison of such different versions by the same conductor as "trivial," even as an "addiction" that attests to the "fetishism" of the members of the Toscanini cult. Yet precisely because masterpieces are inexhaustible, one can learn a great deal from seeing what a great artist like Toscanini decides to do with a given work on different occasions.

In Toscanini's case, moreover, such comparisons also help to undermine the myth that he was, in his later years, a rigid and driven conductor who took everything too fast and cranked out performances by applying an "all-purpose formula" to the bare notes on the page. To study the different ways in which Toscanini tried, for example, to manage the entry of the second subject in the first movement of the "*Eroica*," or the steady build to the climax of the Prelude to *Tristan*, is not only to learn something about the expressive potential

(and the problems) of these works; it is also to experience for oneself the results of what so many musicians who worked with Toscanini have spoken and written about: the ceaseless effort and restudy that he put into each new performance of a familiar work. And this is equally true of the different performances of, say, the first movement of Beethoven's Ninth recorded by Furtwängler, whom Horowitz sets up, in opposition to Toscanini, as the main upholder of Germanic "tradition."

There was in fact no hallowed, traditional way of conducting Beethoven, Wagner, Brahms, and the other great Austro-German composers that was freer, more personal, more "poetic" than Toscanini's way with these masters. Turn-of-the-century critics make it clear that Richter was strict and even-handed where Nikisch was often free to the point of self-indulgence. And with later conductors, where we have many recordings to go by, anyone can hear for himself that Furtwängler, Muck, Walter, and Weingartner were as different from one another as any one of them was from Toscanini. Toscanini and Mahler, who disagreed on many things, were at one on the question of tradition. When Mahler first came to the Vienna Opera, he was told that his tempi in Wagner were not traditional because they were not those of Richter, who had learned the scores from Wagner himself. What you call tradition, Mahler memorably told his accusers, is nothing but your own indolence and slovenliness ("*Bequemlichkeit und Schlampererei*").

Wagner's son Siegfried, a gifted conductor and composer in his own right, had grown up hearing the Bayreuth performances of *Tristan*

conducted by Richter and others of the Wagnerian inner circle. Yet he was so impressed by the Toscanini *Tristan* he heard at Milan's La Scala in 1901 that he resolved then and there to invite Toscanini to Bayreuth—though he did not succeed until 1930, owing to the objections of other Wagner family members to non-German conductors. And Mahler himself praised Toscanini's *Tristan* to his protégé Walter: "Toscanini conducts it in a manner entirely different from ours but magnificently in his own way." We, who are blessed in having so many recordings at our disposal, are still freer to enjoy both Toscanini and Furtwängler conducting Wagner, Toscanini and Walter conducting Brahms, Toscanini and Weingartner conducting Beethoven—and to learn from the differences.

The testimony of Toscanini's greatest recordings, of many of his most distinguished colleagues, of competent critics who listened long and carefully to him during his prime, and of the men who played for him does seem to indicate that he really was—to return to our starting-point—the best. He combined, at a higher level and more consistently than anyone else of his time, the technical and imaginative gifts required of a conductor with the sustained concentration and the iron discipline needed to weld a hundred players into a single responsive instrument. But to affirm this is not to engage in idolatry or to brand oneself as a member of any supposed Toscanini "cult." As he was the first to admit, he had bad days as well as good, and his substantial recorded legacy naturally reflects this unevenness. It is, nonetheless, one of our most precious cultural possessions.

Varieties of Yiddish Verse—In English

Maurice Friedberg

Un *vu bizt du geven . . . ?*—“And where were you when we needed you?”—asks a plaintive old Yiddish song. The question might be asked of Yiddish itself. Why did we not appreciate its wonders decades ago, when it was still a living tongue?

That the Gentile world once viewed Yiddish, by and large, with hostility and condescension comes as no surprise. What is often forgotten, however, is that Yiddish had few friends among influential segments of the Jewish community of Eastern Europe where most of the speakers of Yiddish lived until the Holocaust. Zionists viewed it as unworthy even of comparison with the holy tongue, Hebrew, while the Orthodox barely tolerated it on purely pragmatic grounds as the language of the uneducated and of womenfolk, of whom no learning was expected. At the other end of the ideological spectrum, worldly Jews regarded Yiddish as a major impediment to the cultural advancement of their backward co-religionists. *Yidish—a mise zakh; poilish iz unzer shprakh*: “Yiddish is an ugly thing, Polish is our language,” proclaimed a semi-serious ditty from a prewar Warsaw cabaret.

But the linguistic assimilation of the Jewish masses proceeded slowly. For the bulk of Eastern Europe’s Jews, Yiddish was not, in the contemptuous term, *der jargon* but *mame-loshn*, “mama’s language,” and its emotional pull remained strong. Like it or not, those intent on reaching the mass of Jews, on establishing their presence *oif der yidisher gas*, “in the Jewish community,” had to do it in Yiddish.

It was the Jewish Socialist Bund

and the Jewish labor movement that understood this most clearly and gradually became the most important and faithful champions of Yiddish language and culture. Following the Revolution of 1917, the Communists, too, extended their patronage. (In contrast to the Bundists, however, their friendship proved opportunistic and worse, culminating in the total suppression of all Yiddish institutions in the aftermath of World War II, and the mass murder of Yiddish writers in 1952.)

No wonder, then, that those who chose to write in Yiddish gravitated both to secularism and to the political Left. Isaac Bashevis Singer recalls that his father, a rabbi in Warsaw, “considered all the secular [Yiddish] writers to be heretics, all unbelievers—they really were, too, most of them.” In Eastern Europe, a great many identified with radical groups, including the Communists. And in America, as Zishe Landau, a Yiddish poet, aptly noted, much of Yiddish verse was little more than “the rhyme department of the Jewish labor movement.”

Even as the horrors of Nazi persecution of the Jews were gradually becoming known, these militantly secular Yiddish poets, with some notable exceptions, eschewed “parochial” Jewish concerns, avoided religious subject matter, and proudly proclaimed their universal human allegiance. Thus, Berish Weinstein, a native (like me) of the Polish city of Rzeszow, wrote in America about Harlem and rural blacks (and, when appropriate, about Jesus and the Virgin), but not about his kith and kin, not about the Jewish God of his Rzeszow ancestors and mine.

In their art, many of the Yiddish poets outside the USSR voluntarily observed the commandment which their colleagues in the Soviet Union obeyed by compulsion: literature was to be “national in form and socialist in content.” In writing,

according to this doctrine, the national form was, simply, one’s native language; otherwise there was little or no room for diversity, for individual ethnic or religious worries and hopes, fears and aspirations, no specific values, no collective memories. Stripped of language, one body of literature was pretty much like any other. That, indeed, was one reason why, long before World War II, Soviet Yiddish literature began rapidly to lose readers: there was little specifically Jewish about it. And the same has proved true in the United States, where secular Yiddish schools, theaters, and newspapers have all but disappeared, while, by contrast, religiously and ethnically distinct Jewish institutions, from synagogues and yeshivas to summer camps and English-language publications, continue to thrive. It turns out that of the various components of a cultural legacy, language may well be the least durable.

Un vu bizt du geven . . . ? The wonderful blessings denied to Yiddish when it still boasted millions of speakers and a vibrant literature come to it now, nearly too late—after the destruction of East European Jewry in the Holocaust, after the forcible liquidation of Yiddish in the Soviet Union, after the near-obliteration of Yiddish among the younger generation of American and Israeli Jews.

Yiddish-language courses now earn college credit at major universities. Scholarly investigations in Yiddish lexicography, doctoral dissertations on aspects of the Yiddish novel, entire sessions on Yiddish language and folklore at academic congresses, international conferences devoted solely to Yiddish (and at Oxford, of all places), the first Nobel Prize ever awarded a Yiddish author—the cup runneth over. And now most recently in *The Penguin Book of Yiddish Verse*

MAURICE FRIEDBERG, senior university scholar and professor of Russian literature at the University of Illinois, has recently been awarded a Guggenheim Fellowship for a study of literary translation.

and *American Yiddish Poetry: An Anthology* we have two luxuriously printed collections of Yiddish poetry—with *mame-loshn* originals and facing English renditions for those whose culturally deprived backgrounds preclude an adequate command of *der jargon*—proudly released by a leading commercial publisher and one of our major university presses.*

The editors of both these new volumes are painfully aware that their efforts, along with Irving Howe and Eliezer Greenberg's *A Treasury of Yiddish Poetry*, published less than twenty years ago, may well become that poetry's memorials. Thus, we read in the introduction to *The Penguin Book of Modern Yiddish Verse*:

There is still, after World War II, some brilliant work done in Yiddish, more in poetry than in prose; but for the most part it is now a literature of survivors, displaced and aging. By the end of the 20th century its historians will evidently be faced with the melancholy task of acknowledging its termination, since almost nowhere today are there young writers for whom the use of Yiddish remains inevitable, spontaneous, organic.

The editors of *American Yiddish Poetry* are more specific. Already in the 19th century, they write, Yiddish had become an "externalized object of Jewish self-hatred," and "The movement of the young, bright, and successful away from Yiddish again left the language mostly to lower-class readers of limited culture and thus reinforced the vicious circle."

Although Yiddish went on to experience a decade or so of euphoria in the period between the two world wars, the end was to come with terrible swiftness:

The base of Yiddish culture in Eastern Europe, with its historical foundation, institutional network, and millions of native speakers, was destroyed by Hitler and Stalin. A third of the Jewish people perished in the Holocaust, but the destruction of Yiddish was total. Stalin killed Yiddish writers; Hitler killed Yiddish writers and their readers alike.

But the editors are also frank to

recognize that even without Hitler and Stalin, the future of Yiddish was hardly bright. "We must admit," they continue,

that the trend toward assimilation was overpowering everywhere; in Soviet Russia after the Revolution, in Poland, France, England, Argentina, and the United States. The attempt to create a modern, cosmopolitan, autonomous culture in a separate Jewish language with no state of its own was doomed to failure.

BOTH these anthologies, let it be said from the outset, are more than impressive; both are products of herculean labor; both are magnificent collections of verse with translations that range from competent (if at times excessively free) to splendid; and both are heartily recommended to lovers of Yiddish and to devotees of poetry generally. Both volumes are also supplied with long and informative introductions that outline the history of Yiddish and of Yiddish writing generally.

In addition to all these virtues which they display in common, *American Yiddish Poetry* offers two extra benefits, a discussion of Yiddish versification and a brief description of Jewish American painters and sculptors. The introduction to this volume is also the more satisfactory of the two in recognizing the degree to which "modern Yiddish literature was written in the genres, forms, and conventions of Russian (and through it, European) literature." An awareness of this fact—hardly surprising considering that nearly all of the poets in both volumes were born and educated in Russia or in Poland—helps us to understand many otherwise puzzling features of the aesthetic creed of Yiddish poets, whether in Europe or in America.

As for the *Penguin* anthology, it is a rich and varied feast. It offers work by thirty-nine poets, but devotes most of its space to six, of whom only one, Abraham Sutzkever, a highly inventive craftsman, is still alive and active in Israel, where he also edits a Yiddish literary journal. The other five include two poets who lived in the United

States, Moyshe-Leyb Halpern and Jacob Glatstein (both are also featured in *American Yiddish Poetry*); two from the Soviet Union, Moyshe Kulbak and Perets Markish, both victims of Stalin's terror; and Itsik Manger, master of the deceptively simple folk song. Markish began as an Expressionist. Glatstein, an intellectual modernist, is usually identified with the Introspectivist school. Kulbak's verse forms—and also his early preference for rural subject matter—link him with the Russian Sergei Yesenin. As for Halpern, his blend of the comic with social protest and, particularly in his later work, mellow reflection and intricate imagery defies simple characterization. The *Penguin* anthology also offers a sample of Morris Rosenfeld, the foremost American Yiddish "sweatshop poet," a school that goes unrepresented in *American Yiddish Poetry*.

THE editors of the *Penguin* anthology note in their introduction that "men like Glatstein and Glants-Leyeles knew [American literature] well, reading Pound and Eliot, Marianne Moore and Wallace Stevens." *American Yiddish Poetry* is more emphatic on this point. "From an American perspective," the editors declare, American Yiddish poetry "must be seen as an unjustly neglected branch of American literature, a kaleidoscope of American experience and art entombed in yellowing, crumbling books, in the muteness of its own dead language." And so indeed it should be considered. Still, even such quintessentially American poems as A. Leyeles's "The Madonna in the Subway" and "Manhattan Bridge" may also have foreign roots, as they strongly resemble two poems by the Russian Futurist Vladimir Mayakovsky ("The Girl from Woolworth's" and "Brooklyn Bridge") written after his visit to the United States in 1925. And the intricate structure of Leyeles's "A Sonnet Garland" may have been

* *The Penguin Book of Modern Yiddish Verse*, edited by Irving Howe, Ruth R. Wisse, and Khone Shmeruk, Viking, 719 pp., \$29.95. *American Yiddish Poetry: A Bilingual Anthology*, edited by Benjamin and Barbara Harshav, University of California Press, 813 pp., \$55.00.

suggested in part by medieval Hebrew poetry and even Hebrew prayers.

My own favorite lines by Leyeles are his metapoetic vision of the divine origin of writing in "The God of Israel," which is included in *American Yiddish Poetry*; the translation, as is mostly the case throughout this book, is by the editors.

In a gray-gray once-upon-a-time,
From a mountain-top into a valley,
He dropped two handfuls of letters,
Scattered them over the roads of the earth.
They sparkled with speech,
blazed with sayings,
And since then—
For thousands of years we seek them,
For thousands of years we save them,
For thousands of years we explain them,
And there is no solution on earth
For the letters, the sayings, the words.

Another manuscript and another manuscript
Entangled, bound, locked together—
Letters in love with letters.

Leyeles and Glatstein may have been the greater Yiddish American poets, but H. Leivick (pseudonym of Leivick Halpern, 1888-1962) was arguably the one with the wider popular following. "Sublimated suffering, messianic fervor, a mystical tone, and a naive humanism, combined with a Neo-Romantic musicality of harmonious verse lines that were imbued with Russian Symbolism, marked the voice of his poetry," write the editors of *American Yiddish Poetry*. Both anthologies feature "On the Roads of Siberia," a very characteristic short poem. Here is Cynthia Ozick's rendition in the *Penguin* anthology:

Even now
on the roads of Siberia
you can find
a button,
a shred of one of my shoelaces,
a belt,
a bit of broken cup,
a leaf of Scripture.

Even now
on the rivers of Siberia

you can find
some trace:
a scrap of the raft
the river swallowed;
in the woods
a bloodied swatch dried stiff;
some frozen footprints
over the snow.

WHAT sorts of other delights are to be found in these two books? In what follows I shall try to give some sense of both the range and the quality of the verse represented in them.

As mentioned earlier, religious motifs are rare in Yiddish poetry, despite the fact that the vast majority of the poets had a traditional religious upbringing. But here is "To be a Jew" by Aaron Zeitlin, in Robert Friend's translation:

Being a Jew means running
forever to God
even if you are His betrayer,
means expecting to hear any day,
even if you are a nay sayer,
the blare of Messiah's horn;

means, even if you wish to,
you cannot escape His snares,
you cannot cease to pray—
even after all the prayers,
even after all the "evens."

(Penguin)

The concerns of most Yiddish verse, when not ideological, are earthy enough. Zishe Landau's "In the Tavern" may not conform to the stereotype of Yiddish poetry, but it is not all that uncommon. The English rendition is Irving Feldman's:

Like broken-down actors who
never made it,
they croaked away in hoarse falsettos,
while the night surrendered its hours
faster than the slowpoke clock
could count.

There before three full steins,
three men sat,
the "kid" among them sixty if a day.
Six beggars the eyes that kept
looking at me
while the trio gabbed their
anecdotes, stories, jokes—
about all the girls who came to
them crawling
and all those guys they used to
push around.

That squeaking of a rusty wheel
was their lies,
and that old horse in heavy harness
the wanton laugh lugging their
voices out.
God, don't punish me for what
I'm saying—
but that's how a husband sees
his old wife:
tired out and seedy.

(Penguin)

There is some erotic verse. Here is a short sample by J.L. Teller (Judd Teller), a well known English-language American writer and journalist featured in both anthologies as a serious Yiddish poet:

Excited pillows torture
A girl's raw nipples.
Her mouth is as hard as rock
And wet with first fog.
The temples beat tom-tom,
Hot and blunt.
And hands—like nettles—
Sting the naked body.

(*American Yiddish Poetry*)

Some of the more sensual poetry is written by women, which at the time scandalized both critics and the reading public. Celia Dropkin's "Adam," translated by Grace Schulman:

I met you on the way,
young Adam,
fondled,
soothed by women's hands.
Before we kissed
you begged me,
your face a pale
gentle lily:
"Don't bite. Don't bite."
I saw your body
covered with teeth marks.
Frightened, I bit.
You widened your nostrils,
breathed life into me
and drew near:
a seething horizon to a field.

(Penguin)

There is even cheerful and playful verse, of which this excerpt from Moyshe-Leyb Halpern's *The Golden Peacock* (1924) is a fine illustration. The translation appears in *American Yiddish Poetry*:

So I ask my dear wife
How to finish the affair
Of my little booky—
Says she: Let happiness leave on
a train
And wave back with a hanky.

Says I: Hanky-panky—
 Says she: Booky-shmooky—
 And asks me whether I'd like
 With my coffee a cooky.
 Says I: Cooky-shmooky—
 And tell her to put a case on my
 pillow
 And not to play hooky.
 Says she: Hooky-shmooky.
 And tells me to repair her shoe
 By hook or by crooky.
 Says I: Crooky-shmooky.
 So she jumps up, and points at
 my head:
 I am bald and spooky.
 Says I:
 Spooky-crooky-hooky-cooky-
 hanky-panky-booky-shmooky.
 So we laugh together—
 Laugh so nice.
 Till she closes my eyes—
 Closes my eyes.
 And rocks me with a song of rain
 and light,
 Rain and light,
 That you sing to little children
 at night,
 Children at night.

In the arena of history, Jacob Glatstein was among the first Yiddish poets to see the still barely perceptible Nazi menace. In his 1938 poem, "Good Night, World," he called, in defiant despair, for a return to the only fortress the Jews then had, the traditional (and, in his view, deformed) Jewish way of life:

Good night, wide world
 Big, stinking world.
 Not you, but I, slam the gate.
 In my long robe,
 With my flaming,
 With my proud gait,
 At my own command—
 I return to the ghetto.
 Wipe out, stamp out all the
 alien traces.
 I grovel in your dirt,
 Hail, hail, hail,
 Humpbacked Jewish life.
 A ban [anathema—MF], world,
 on your unclean cultures.
 Though all is desolate,
 I roll in your dust,
 gloomy, Jewish life.
 (*American Yiddish Poetry*)

Some years later, as the facts of annihilation became known, Glatstein wrote "Without Jews," an outcry of pain and anguish which, as the editors of the *Penguin* anthology rightly note, inverts many familiar passages from the Jewish prayerbook and traditional kabbal-

istic beliefs about the divine presence. The translation is Cynthia Ozick's:

Without Jews, no Jewish God.
 If, God forbid, we should quit
 this world, your poor tent's light
 would out.
 Abraham knew You in a cloud:
 since then, You are the flame
 of our face, the rays
 our eyes blaze,
 our likeness
 whom we formed:
 in every land and town
 a stranger.
 Shattered Jewish skulls,
 shards of the divine,
 smashed, shamed pots—
 these were Your light-bearing
 vessels,
 Your tangibles,
 Your portents of miracle!
 Now count these heads
 by the millions of the dead.
 Around You the stars go dark.
 Our memory of You, obscured.
 Soon Your reign will close.
 Where Jews sowed,
 a scorched waste.
 Dew weeps
 on dead grass.
 The dream raped,
 reality raped,
 both blotted out.
 Whole congregations sleep,
 the babies, the women,
 the young, the old.
 Even Your pillars, Your rocks,
 the tribe of Your saints,
 sleep their dead
 eternal sleep.

Who will dream You?
 Remember You?
 Deny You?
 Yearn after You?
 Who will flee You,
 only to return
 over a bridge of longing?

No end to night
 for an extinguished people.
 Heaven and earth wiped out.
 Your tent void of light.
 Flicker of the Jews' last hour.
 Soon, Jewish God,
 Your eclipse.

(*Penguin*)

Glatstein was not alone in his rebellion against an unjust God Who failed to protect the people of His covenant. Here is another reckoning with God, by Kadya Molodovsky, a leading American poet, in Irving Howe's English rendition. It is entitled, with bitter irony, "God

of Mercy," a common appellation in the prayerbook:

O God of Mercy
 For the time being
 Choose another people.
 We are tired of death, tired of
 corpses,
 We have no more prayers.
 For the time being
 Choose another people.
 We have run out of blood
 For victims,
 Our houses have been turned
 into desert,
 The earth lacks space for
 tombstones,
 There are no more lamentations
 Nor songs of woe
 In the ancient texts.

God of Mercy
 Sanctify another land.
 Another Sinai.
 We have covered every field and
 stone
 With ashes and holiness.
 With our crones
 With our young
 With our infants
 We have paid for each letter in
 Your Commandments.

God of Mercy
 Lift up Your fiery brow,
 Look on the peoples of the
 world,
 Let them have the prophecies
 and Holy Days
 Who mumble Your words in
 every tongue.
 Teach them the Deeds
 And the ways of temptation.

God of Mercy
 To us give rough clothing
 Of shepherds who tend sheep
 Of blacksmiths at the hammer
 Of washerwomen, cattle
 slaughterers
 And lower still.
 And O God of Mercy
 Grant us one more blessing—
 Take back the divine glory of
 our genius.

(*Penguin*)

One possible, grisly verdict in such an imaginary court of justice, in which God sits in the dock of the accused, is announced in the closing lines of Itsik Manger's "The 'Lovers of Israel' at the Belzhets Death Camp." The translation is Leonard Wolf's:

Trembling and feverish, Reb
 Meirl of Przemyśl

Waits, leaning on his old stick.
 "Gentlemen,"
 He says, "Let us in unison call

To God, 'Creator of worlds, Thou
 art mighty and great,
 But we Galician Jews forever
 erase
 Your name from the list of true
 Lovers of Israel.' "

(*Penguin*)

OF YIDDISH poetry created during the Holocaust, little, understandably, survives. A moving exception is Abraham Sutzkever's "The Lead Plates at the Rom Press," based on a plan of the Jewish underground in Vilna to use the lead from the printing plant that for generations had produced editions of the Talmud (and, latterly, secular books as well) to make bullets. Isaiah's prophecy was to be reversed: plowshares were to be beaten into swords. Here are the last two stanzas in Neal Kozodoy's English rendition:

Letter by melting letter the lead,
 Liquefied bullets, gleamed with
 thoughts:
 A verse from Babylon, a verse
 from Poland,
 Seething, flowing into the one
 mold.
 Now must Jewish grit, long
 concealed in words,
 Detonate the world in a shot!

Who in Vilna Ghetto has beheld
 the hands
 Of Jewish heroes clasp-
 ing weapons
 Has beheld Jerusalem in its
 throes,
 The crumbling of those granite
 walls;
 Grasping the words smelted into
 lead,
 Conning their sounds by heart.
 (*Penguin*)

Sutzkever is, appropriately, the last poet in the *Penguin* anthology. His meditative 1974 poem from a diary may be read as a melancholy reflection on the future legacy of Yiddish poetry itself. The translation is Cynthia Ozick's.

Who will last? And what? The
 wind will stay,
 and the blind man's blindness
 when he's gone away,
 And a thread of foam—a sign
 of the sea—
 and a bit of cloud snarled in a
 tree.

Who will last? And what? A
 word as green
 as Genesis, making grasses grow.
 And what the prideful rose
 might mean,
 Seven of those grasses know.

Of all that northflung starry stuff,
 the star descended in the tear
 will last.
 In its jar, a drop of wine stands
 fast.

Who lasts? God abides—isn't
 that enough?

A FINAL NOTE.

"I write for myself, but I publish for the money," Alexander Pushkin remarked some 150 years ago. The writing (like, to an extent, the reading) of poetry may be a sublime activity, but translation, editing, and publishing are mundane pursuits. Both these admirable anthologies are also unfortunately marred by scores of garbled transliterations of Yiddish versions of Slavic proper names and, especially, names of cities, towns, rivers, and the like. This is no meaningless quibble: many a reader of the English renditions will thus be prevented from looking them up in, say, the *Encyclopaedia Judaica*. Similarly, readers may be puzzled by the use in translation of Yiddish forms (often diminutives!) of otherwise familiar Hebrew proper names. And old habits and geographic enmities apparently die hard: Aba Shtoltzenberg's poem "*A beizer vinter*"—an angry, furious, nasty winter—becomes, in the *Penguin* anthology, "Galician Winter." This is not the first occasion on which I have had to defend the honor of my native Galicia in the pages of COMMENTARY. Shame on the editors and the translator (which, in monosyllabic Yiddish, is, simply, *feh*).

The Magic Kingdom

CALCULATED RISKS: A CENTURY OF ARMS CONTROL, WHY IT HAS FAILED, AND HOW IT CAN BE MADE TO WORK. By BRUCE BERKOWITZ. *Simon & Schuster*. 221 pp. \$18.95.

THE ARMS CONTROL DELUSION. By MALCOLM WALLOP and ANGELO M. CODEVILLA. *ICS Press*. 220 pp. \$16.95.

Reviewed by WHITTLE JOHNSTON

NEITHER Bruce Berkowitz nor Malcolm Wallop and Angelo Codevilla tolerate gladly those who would center America's national-security policy in the magic kingdom of arms control. While Berkowitz highlights a number of real-world complexities that restrict the contribution arms control can make to desirable policy outcomes, he nonetheless finds, within those limits, a useful role for it. Wallop-Codevilla, by contrast, attack the very foundations on which the arms-control process rests, and condemn support for it as detrimental to the achievement of our most basic national interests. Let us evaluate Berkowitz's guerrilla harassment of the kingdom before we turn to Wallop-Codevilla's frontal assault upon it.

Berkowitz's first contention is that, judged by its results, arms control has been a failure: over the past two decades it has generally limited neither arms nor military technology nor defense spending. In quest of an explanation for its ineffectiveness he cites the familiar parallel with the ineffectiveness of price controls, i.e., it is simply impossible to regulate the multiple factors that shape prices. As long as the demand for weapons persists, arms control merely alters the means through which nations obtain them. Indeed, it may make

things worse, by jogging sluggish bureaucracies to get around the constraints through the development of new, and more dangerous, weapons.

Recognition of the inadequacy of such "quantitative" restraints as those of the Washington Naval Treaty (an outgrowth of the Washington Conference, which met from November 12, 1921 to February 6, 1922) or SALT I spurred efforts at "qualitative" limitations through the control of technology. These efforts often run aground, however, on the "self-extinguishing process": while controllers usually begin by regulation of that which is technically feasible and politically acceptable, they are soon frustrated by arms that are neither. The fact that, in 1972, launchers were a relatively accurate measure of strategic forces was reflected in the rather simple terms of SALT I. The fact that, by the end of the decade, this was no longer the case was reflected in the complexities and inadequacy of SALT II. If launchers can no longer serve as the unit of account, can one(s) of comparable effectiveness be found?

The growth in complexity of the unit of account further compounds problems of verification—for example, of cruise missiles and mobile ones. While "the technological advantage between hunting and hiding weapons has swung back and forth," certain political problems have persisted. Democracies, by their continuing inability to act on the evidence of violations, still fail to answer Fred Iklé's elemental question of over a quarter-of-a-century ago, "After detection, what?" Those who imagine that a military build-up constitutes such a response should be sobered by the awareness that, as defense spending goes up, so does opposition to it, and that, historically, all our defense build-ups have tapered off after some five or six years. Recognition of the many problems in the verification of modern weapons brings Berkowitz back to another facet of his concern with "qualitative" con-

trol: why wasn't the technology banned?

He finds two main reasons and devotes a chapter to each. The essence of the first derives from the inability of states to agree on "who stops first?" Perhaps the clearest instance of this was the shift in the Soviet position from unwavering opposition to a test ban to advocacy of a total ban—in May 1955, just as the Soviets were completing decisive advances in their own weapons systems. In Berkowitz's words: "The Soviets wanted first to prove their Teller-Ulam device, and then shut the door on any other countries hoping to build a similar weapon." The partial Test Ban Treaty of 1963 had little effect on the development of nuclear weapons, in accordance with Berkowitz's generalization that most arms-control treaties have scrapped old weapons, capped current ones, and left research and development uncontrolled.

The essence of the second is "the technological web," whose strands closely bind military to civilian developments. At the 1921-22 Washington Conference, the U.S. abandoned the effort to ban strategic bombers, because of their close intertwining with advances in civilian aviation, which themselves promised a "boon to civilization." A contemporary parallel would be the futility of seeking to ban anti-satellite weapons without simultaneously banning another "boon to civilization"—space shuttles. No foolproof barrier can block the adaptation of the technology of plowshares to that of swords. Nor is fixed discrimination possible within military technology itself, e.g., between tactical and strategic missiles, or between air- and missile-defense systems.

Why, then, do people believe in arms control? Beyond the familiar popular justification one finds "the elegant argument," derived from game theory, which views arms control as a means to coordinate "the policies of the United States and

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transaction

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Clint Bolick

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the Soviet Union so that the stalemate of deterrence" holds. But in their assumption that states enter negotiations to head off an arms race, these abstract models misread those motivations. While Japan, on the eve of the Washington Conference, was committed to an arms race, neither the United States nor Britain was. Nor is it accurate to say that SALT I averted an ABM race, since the United States had no intention of entering one. Both agreements simply "allowed the countries that were determined to arm to go ahead and arm, and permitted the countries that were unwilling to arm to fool themselves into thinking that they had reduced the threat presented by their opponent."

Although Berkowitz has, to this point, directed his fire at both the practical record and the theoretical justification for arms control, he still contends it "can reduce the probability and costs of war" and "play an important role in American foreign policy." He seeks to make his case, first, through a chapter devoted to "Arms Control That Works": the agreements on Incidents at Sea and on the Hot Line. These were successful because they cost no faction in either government much, verification was simple, and they dealt with "practical issues on a day-to-day basis." Even such successful accords should not be burdened with exaggerated expectations, however. The Hot Line merely guarantees that messages will get through, not that they will be truthful. It may, indeed, reveal "just how narrow the range of clearly defined mutual interests" between the United States and the Soviet Union is.

The second way Berkowitz seeks to make his positive case is by demonstrating that many of the goals sought through arms-control accords may be achieved by unilateral measures like improving command and control, or emphasizing mobile ICBMs. Such considerations show clearly that arms control makes sense only when related to overall American national-security policy. These insights are pulled together, with others, in six concluding guidelines: arms control is not an end in itself; bad arms control is

worse than none; technology cannot be retarded; success does not lead to success; unilateral policies that accomplish arms-control goals are to be preferred; negotiations should be done quietly and by small delegations.

Through his clear account of the failure of arms control to live up to the claims of its proponents, and of some of the factors contributing to that failure, Berkowitz helps counter the persistent tendency of many in our culture to exaggerate childishly what arms control can accomplish. But the subtitle of his book promises far more than it delivers. The "Century of Arms Control" to which it refers omits the massive formal efforts made under the auspices of the League of Nations, as well as such informal understandings as those worked out between the United States and Great Britain. Occasional factual inaccuracies also mar his account: the Baruch Plan was presented to the UN in 1946, not 1947; SALT I limited ICBM silos and ballistic-missile submarines, but not bombers. And, despite his insights, Berkowitz evades the primal problems which must be addressed as the precondition to any serious effort to shape a national strategy, most specifically a clear assessment of the Soviet threat. His glib agnosticism on this issue clouds his insight into the central antinomy in American policy: that between efforts to further security through negotiated accords and efforts to further security through unilateral action. Exploration of this antinomy is the principal concern of Malcolm Wallop (senior U.S. Senator from Wyoming) and Angelo M. Codevilla (senior research fellow at the Hoover Institution).

AT THE center of Wallop and Codevilla's analysis stands this grim irony: "During the quarter century during which arms control has been in the forefront of our national agenda, a massive change in the balance of power between the U.S. and Soviet arsenals has taken place in favor of the Soviet Union, and . . . the danger of war is greater now than when the arms-control process began." In former Secretary of Defense Caspar Weinber-

ger's words, America's military predicament in the 1980's is the very one we had hoped to avoid by entering into the arms-control process in the first place. While Berkowitz's analysis points to a pragmatic use of negotiated accords when they serve our interest, and unilateral measures when they do, Wallop-Codevilla contend that the delusion of arms control has obscured the necessity for choosing vigorous unilateral measures essential to protect national survival.

The interwar period had taught the fateful lesson that the Axis military build-up had taken place under the cover of arms control. But this insight was obscured after World War II by the notion that nuclear weapons had "forever made major war an unpaying proposition." In our original arms-control proposals, the *means* were at least proportionate to the *control* sought. By the 1960's, however, in light of the refusal of the Soviets to put any part of their military establishment under international inspection, and our exaggerated confidence in what we could learn through intelligence satellites, we had begun to transform emphasis on the ability to achieve *compliance* into the ability to *observe and listen to* the Soviet Union. Confidence that missiles had taken pretty much their ultimate form was another foundation on which the arms-control delusion was built.

Unable to deal with the world as it was, the foreign-policy establishment of the 1960's and 1970's fashioned a pleasing substitute by a triple abstraction from reality—political, military, and technological. Politically it saw arms control as a means to shape Soviet intentions into accord with our own preferences—overlooking the prospect that Soviet leaders might make "common cause with American arms controllers to restrain the U.S. military without any intention of restraining their own." Evading the question of whether the Soviets were developing the nuclear forces to win wars, Secretary of Defense Robert S. McNamara refused to deal with an open-ended Soviet military challenge on its own terms, and sought instead means to assure peace, at relatively low cost, what-

ever the Soviets did. Once the U.S. gave up its insistence on cooperative verification, it would have "to worry about the relationship of what it knew to what it did not know." But the arms controllers assumed that our intelligence sees all there is to see in the Soviet Union, and the strategic forces controlled in treaties stand for all Soviet strategic forces.

THE authors then demonstrate, in some detail, how this threefold substitution for reality has shaped the terms of SALT I, SALT II, and other accords. "The moral of the story is that the U.S. negotiators define the parameters of arms-control agreements less for their military significance than to conform them to the ability of U.S. intelligence to gather information." While the arms controllers seek to focus America's vision on sterile debates within a solipsistic world, the larger reality of the mounting Soviet military threat is pushed out of sight. We expected these agreements "to ratify a convergence of political objectives" between us and the Soviet Union; Moscow instead (and largely within the terms of the treaties) built the very forces it had been the hope of our negotiators to head off.

Our negotiators of SALT I felt they had brought the Soviets to reject a war-winning (or "counterforce") strategy and join us in accepting the doctrine of Mutual Assured Destruction (MAD). Yet the "mere possibility," in 1972, that Moscow might acquire a war-winning force had become, in 1979, "the near certainty that such a force was in the final stage of construction." Under these straitened circumstances, our premise in SALT II was that "our purpose could be accomplished only if we succeeded in persuading the Soviets not to seriously pursue their own."

Largely through the initiative of Jimmy Carter, the election of 1980 was framed as "a choice between a negotiated solution to America's security problems and a unilateral military one. Having no alternative, Reagan accepted this formulation of the issue, and won the election." Reagan's orientation did not survive to his inauguration, how-

ever. By then the bureaucracies in the State and Defense Departments had supplanted it with a "two-track" policy which saw arms control as essential political cover for Reagan's military build-up.

A fateful consequence has been to "make each step of a U.S. weapons program dependent on the arms-control process," with the contortions through which the MX-missile or antisatellite (ASAT)

programs have been put as painful illustrations. And although the Reagan administration has given more saliency to Soviet violations than its predecessors did, it has more evidence of violations than it has publicized and it has often reduced "compliance" with treaties to our unilateral "interim" observation of them. The most detrimental instance of the latter is Secretary of State George P. Shultz's

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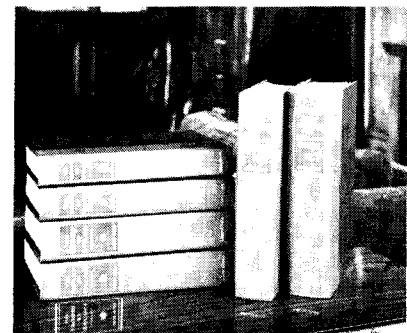
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declaration that, although the "permissive interpretation [of the ABM treaty] is legally correct," we will follow the "restrictive interpretation." This has helped transform Reagan's commitment to build antimissile defenses into a deferral of *whether* to build them into the 1990's.

WHILE Reagan did not "go all the way" with Gorbachev at Reykjavik, he was maneuvered into a trap where he had either to reject arms control or agree to implement the Soviet proposals by stages. His effort to evade this choice has led to a new version of arms control, not through agreements with Moscow but through "American military policies derived from American bureaucratic preferences and domestic politics and shaped to a great but undefinable extent in the name of future agreements with the Soviet Union." This attempted evasion not only removes "arms control entirely from the constitutional and legal framework," but blinds us to the urgent necessity to develop a superior counterforce capability coupled with "a substantial antimissile shield."

By the resolute decisiveness with which they argue their case, Wallop-Codevilla make two major contributions to our understanding of security policy: they compel us to come to terms with the implications of the relentless Soviet drive for counterforce superiority, and they compel us to ponder the heavy toll faith in negotiated accords with Moscow has exacted upon our will to meet our own needs with our own deeds. One might, however, question their argument at a number of points. Thus, while an analysis that concentrates on the vulnerability of the land-based leg of the triad is understandable, it is incomplete; and their conviction that "the strength of democracies lies in unambiguous policies that inspire moral commitment" is surely an oversimplification. Nevertheless, by their insistence that we grapple with fundamental issues, they place all who are concerned with America's security policy in their debt. Their thesis constitutes a brilliant challenge, vigorously developed, to the complacent prem-

ises which have commonly governed arms-control policy.

ACHIEVEMENT of a sense of proportion is the indispensable prerequisite to the forging of a responsible foreign policy. Since the birth of the Republic, Americans have been afflicted by recurrent bouts with the debility of disproportion. Its most widespread manifestation in our time has been an exaggeration of the contribution any given arms-control agreement can make to the control of arms, and of the contribution the control of arms as such can make to our nation's broader goals. Specificity in analysis provides at least partial immunity to the virus. For once the debate is framed as one between upholders of peace and law as against pushers of war and guns, the infection will have its way. Both of these books, the one more effectively than the other, carry healthy antibodies.

The Boy Wonder

TRUMP: THE ART OF THE DEAL. By DONALD J. TRUMP with TONY SCHWARTZ. Random House. 246 pp. \$19.95.

Reviewed by ROGER STARR

IN AN accelerated world, it seems hardly extraordinary that a very rich New Yorker named Donald J. Trump should, at about forty-one years of age, publish his autobiography. To write it, he has enlisted the help of Tony Schwartz, a New York journalist with a healthy taste for gossip. They have quickly found a large audience waiting to learn how Trump became, in such a hurry, a household word connoting wealth, good looks, versatility, daring, ruthlessness, and the shrewd and licit exploitation of insider information.

With a few possible nudges from his collaborator, Trump has discovered a tone of voice for this book similar to that in which boys even younger than he used to call their mothers' attention to their

cycling skills. Behind this posture of youthful enthusiasm, however, Trump stands ready to impart to others the secrets he has deployed to achieve his own success. Such success, he exhorts us to believe, goes to those who trust themselves. Market research is futile; bureaucracy, redundant; large organizations, counterproductive. In his own career, Trump has deliberately overridden all the checks and balances with which large corporations seek to avoid the risks of entrepreneurship, only (according to him) to find rust instead. He lauds the gut hunch, the contrarian approach: one should buy when everyone else thinks the merchandise is too expensive, and sell when everyone else is buying.

Naturally, we readers are to understand that Trump's advice is to be taken seriously, *ma non troppo*. In the contemporary world, most entrepreneurs, historically the risk-takers of industrial civilization, have learned to follow the lead of large corporations and to avoid risk where they possibly can. If Donald Trump is the exception, not only because (as he puts it) he carries no briefcase but because he insists on courting danger, we, his readers, are expected both to thrill sympathetically to the spectacle and to be at least a little bit skeptical, if not appalled.

Thus we read of the episode in which Trump, without using his own money, decides he is going to transmute New York's defunct Commodore Hotel into a glitzy supercharger for moribund 42nd Street. What do we want to happen? Do we hope that this boy aviator, cutting loop-the-loops above the heads of older and wiser men, will emerge the ace of all aces, thus inducing the thought that we too could accomplish the same if only we dared? Or, do we secretly hope he will come down in flames, thereby reinforcing the lesson that lies in caution? Of course we want both: to soar aloft with him in his triumphs while retaining in our hearts the sure knowledge that sooner or later his prescription for success will end by proving the greater wisdom of our less risky ways.

But what is Trump himself look-

ROGER STARR is a member of the editorial board of the New York Times. His most recent book is *The Rise and Fall of New York City*.

ing for? What is the source of the difference between him and dozens of other young entrepreneurs of his generation? Early on, he assures us that he is not out for money, having, as he says, more than he can use. The disclaimer is no more convincing in his mouth than in any other. But what this book does demonstrate is that although the public may conceive of Trump as a developer of buildings, projects, and other concrete manifestations of his ego and personal taste, his major vocation is really the making of "deals." And at this art he is indeed a master.

In fact, Trump's big physical developments are only two: the glass-and-chrome Grand Hyatt (nee Commodore) Hotel and the equally dramatic Trump Tower on one of the most important sites along New York City's Fifth Avenue. In discussing the first of these structures, Trump does make clear the intense pride he took in the development aspect of his work. He loves the building, and particularly its architectural innovations—the glass sheathing, the *trompe-l'oeil* lobby, the restaurant overhanging the north sidewalk of 42nd Street. Equally important is his sense of what the building he developed (with, let it be said again, other people's money) does for its surroundings.

As for his second project, Trump Tower, he is proud of the waterfall in the atrium, the atrium itself (and, according to him, its financial success), the ingenious reversal of the normal north-south direction of the interior arcade, the selection of the "right" marble. In this case, however, he omits any mention of the secondary thrill of knowing that what he had accomplished would improve the whole neighboring area. (There may be an interesting explanation for the omission. There were persistent rumors in New York that, once having completed his Tower, Trump did what he could to prevent the low, undistinguished buildings on the other side of the Avenue from being replaced by a new building, lest they detract from the Tower's view and the singularity of its apartments; in other words, his

concern for the effect of what he was doing on his surroundings may have been replaced by a concern for what a change in the surroundings would do to him.)

Yet Trump Tower also represents a personal victory of another and perhaps more telling kind. Its meaning is to be found in the account Trump gives of his father's reaction to the building as it was under construction. Fred Trump, originally a carpenter, had become, by doggedness, mastery of his calling, and attention to detail, a remarkably successful developer of middle-income housing that is still standing in good condition in Brooklyn and Queens. Here is how Donald, who had served an apprenticeship in his father's business, describes the first confrontation between parent and filial project:

... my father visited the Trump Tower site midway through construction. Our façade was a glass curtain wall, which is more expensive than brick. In addition,

we were using the most expensive glass you can buy—bronze solar. My father took one look, and he said to me, "Why don't you forget about the damn glass? Give them four or five stories of it and then use common brick for the rest. Nobody is going to look up anyway." . . . I was touched and of course I understood where he was coming from—but also exactly why I'd decided to leave.

The real reason I wanted out of my father's business—more important than the fact that it was physically rough and financially tough—was that I had loftier dreams and visions.

There is no question that Fred Trump's mustache makes him a fierce-looking man; and that he is tough, hard, determined, one has no doubt. Thus, one readily understands that to his son, he must have appeared a tyrant who had to be either outstripped or humbled. Donald J. describes the scene at Trump Tower as a "classic." So it is, by Freud out of Sophocles.

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LITTLE, BROWN

But what about those "loftier dreams and visions"? After Trump Tower, the emphasis in the book, as in the author's life, shifts from physical development in Manhattan to the casino business in Atlantic City, with a few incidental excursions. One of these involves the rebuilding, at no profit, of New York's forlorn ice-skating rink in Central Park. Trump offered to complete a reconstruction job that the city had botched, and he finished it on time and under budget, reaping a magnificent public-relations reward and setting Mayor Edward Koch's teeth permanently and understandably on edge. But what Trump does not say in the book is that the reconstruction was actually done by a contracting firm which he was able to hire because he was not bound by a New York State law requiring municipal contracts of this kind to be awarded separately to four subcontractors. Trump, in other words, was smart enough to see, and to exploit, the potential in the mess posed by the unfinished rink.

ASIDE from a brief flirtation with professional football, the casino phase of Trump's life now overshadows everything else. It began with his contrarian acquisition of a small boardwalk site in Atlantic City. On the lot, he started to build after receiving a license from the New Jersey Casino Control Commission. By book's end he has become the owner of two operating casinos in Atlantic City, with a third under construction. Although still active enough in New York City, he is now a gambling entrepreneur—that is to say, an entrepreneur who accommodates other people's uncontrollable taste for gambling.

Though its social cost is grossly exorbitant, the gambling casino does have its economic usefulness. It is a bank for fools. Where other banks attract money by offering depositors a convenient and safe resting place for their cash, easy procedures for transferring it, and a modest return on their capital (made peculiarly safe by government insurance), the casino bank attracts "deposits" by holding out the possibility, the bare possibility,

that some individual depositors will be rewarded at a gigantic rate of return (calculated on the capital risked on a successful wager in isolation from the sum of the same depositor's losing bets). The great majority of depositors in a casino kiss their money goodbye when they enter; but since it is impossible to identify either losers or winners in advance, each entrant can believe that he stands a chance equal to anyone else's of earning that spectacular return on his deposit.

So much for the "consumer"; from the point of view of the owner/operator, the economic utility of such an enterprise is even more simply stated: the after-tax profits of a successful casino are huge. They can be justified, as great wealth can always be justified, on the grounds that so much concentrated capital in the hands of shrewd or humane people can either stimulate constructive economic activity or provide amenities for the public that could not be supplied nearly so well by government, and would not be available if the wealth were left scattered in the hands of individual fools. Those who like to offer such justifications for casino gambling also like to argue that people would gamble anyway, on horses or "numbers." The argument is disingenuous: it takes real perseverance to lose money on eight races or on one daily lottery to the degree and with the thoroughness one can achieve in a casino where action is continuous around the clock. And as far as the state is concerned, it is much easier to tax casinos than illicit numbers operators.

DONALD J. TRUMP knows all this, but he does not discuss it here, concentrating instead on telling his readers how he won sole ownership of his three casino hotels. But the reader should not misunderstand what such ownership means. It means that Donald J. Trump has an income that ranks him among the very richest people in the United States. Thus, the test of the grown-up Donald is no longer whether he has "loftier dreams" than his father but whether he is now prepared to play the role that,

say, the Rockefeller family has played in the use of the resources it gathered and nurtured.

The record so far is not encouraging. Away from the world of real-estate development, Trump is still playing with toys. He has bought the world's (allegedly) most luxurious yacht. He owns the biggest house in Palm Beach. Instead of financing new industries or enterprises, he has been using some of his vast capital, still in its formative stages, to enhance his fortune in stock purchases and sales, sometimes at the expense of fellow stockholders and not even in the pursuit of more effective management of the companies in which he has invested.

Despite Donald J. Trump's "loftier" intentions, then, a fair verdict at the present time is that Fred Trump's housing developments are a more impressive exercise of the social potentialities of private capitalism. The only mitigating factor is that the present verdict may yet not be the final one.

Women Without Love

WOMEN AND LOVE: A CULTURAL REVOLUTION IN PROCESS. By SHERE HITE. Knopf. 922 pp. \$24.95.

Reviewed by CHARLOTTE LOW

THE noise over Shere Hite's latest book, *Women and Love: A Cultural Revolution*, has come and gone, and so has the book itself. This must be an embarrassment for all concerned. Hite's first book, *The Hite Report: A Nationwide Study of Female Sexuality*, reigned over the best-seller lists in 1976, while sales for *Women and Love* have been leisurely at best, despite the hype provided by a *Time* cover story.

Events surrounding the book's publication did not help. Foremost among these was a series of attacks on Hite's statistical methodology—the 100,000 essay questionnaires she sent to a not-very-random selection of women that yielded a mere 4,500 answers. There were hints that Hite had cooked some of the numbers

CHARLOTTE LOW, a new contributor, is a senior editor at *Insight* magazine.

so that her cross-section of respondents would better match the female population at large. Finally there was the revelation that Hite might have impersonated her own secretary in order to strong-arm reporters out of personal interviews with her and into stage-managed press conferences. By the end, even her publisher had stopped returning phone calls from the media.

The publication of the first *Hite Report* transformed the then-thirty-four-year-old Shere Hite from a quondam graduate student and ex-*Playboy* model into a millionaire. Her timing was right. The sexual revolution was still newish in 1976, and sex was being promoted as a form of all-around therapy for every physical and mental ill; middlebrow sexual gurus such as Alex Comfort flourished like fern bars.

Wrapped chastely in a medicinal white jacket and tricked out with impressive looking tables of statistics, the *Hite Report* propounded an arresting but surefire sales thesis—that women have better orgasms, well, alone—and it illustrated that thesis with lots and lots of how-to advice and extracts from confessional letters to the author by recipients of her questionnaire. All this cast a wide net, bringing in readers ranging from the clenched-fist sisterhood to phalanxes of curious men attracted by the extraordinarily salacious contents which described in unblushing detail every conceivable variety of passionate spasm and how to incite it.

To add spice to the pot, the *Hite Report*, like all subsequent Hite productions, claimed to have a feminist agenda—something about doing away with “male-dominant” sex. Strawberry-blond and stern, a sort of Leni Riefenstahl of male-bashing, Hite toured the talk shows in elegant silk dresses and high heels, telling of her reeducation from sex object to sex sociologist at the hands of the National Organization for Women. There was something hilarious about the spectacle—the hurt and angry apostle of women’s liberation catapulted to fame and fortune by pure, prurient male chauvinism.

Women and Love is a much tonier production than either the original

Hite Report or its 1981 successor, *The Hite Report on Male Sexuality* (which was intended to give women a similarly graphic overview of the male animal and, predictably, did not sell nearly so well). The new book is designed in every respect to convey the impression that Shere Hite is to be taken seriously. This, indeed, may be the source of one of her marketing problems. A lengthy bibliography shows she has duly done her homework at the increasingly heavy shelves of feminist scholarship. Quotations from Simone de Beauvoir, Alice Walker, and other *doyennes* of women’s liberation abound, as do endorsements from such luminaries as Barbara Ehrenreich of the Institute for Policy Studies. And the book is heavy, at 922 pages more than twice the length of the original 438-page *Hite Report*, which fit easily into a 1970’s beach bag.

Worst of all for sales, few of the spasms inside the new book are of the kind that rock the bed at midnight when all cats look gray. In bloated chapters with titles like “What is the Purpose of Being Married?” and “Finances and Housework,” the text of *Women and Love*—carefully culled excerpts from those 4,500 responses to those 100,000 questionnaires—consists almost entirely of complaints about men.

The world of *Women and Love* is actually the world of women without love. It is a world where husbands are brutal and demanding, marriages “suffocating,” and boyfriends cold and distant. It is a world where 95 percent of the women report emotional harassment by their men and 84 percent are generally dissatisfied. It is the world of the “relationship,” that affectless late-20th-century substitute for the old-fashioned love affair. In short, Hite’s new book is a chronicle of the collapse of the hopes for female fulfillment held out by the women’s movement.

IN THIS respect, *Women and Love* is a revealing document, fully living up to the premise of its subtitle that a “cultural revolution” has taken place in relations between the sexes; only, it is not the

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*Eleven essays on the life and
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Although Franz Rosenzweig (1886-1929) attained great prestige in his lifetime, few among his followers carried forward his work or even fully comprehended his weighty magnum opus *The Star of Redemption*. Rosenzweig himself ironically observed, “Again and again I am amazed at how little its readers know it. Everybody thinks it is an admonition to kosher eating.” Only recently have scholars begun to re-examine the depth of Rosenzweig’s thinking and to reassess his important position in Jewish intellectual history.

Contributors

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revolution Shere Hite and others had in mind.

Naturally, any assessment of the book's contents must stipulate that 95 percent of the women who received one of Hite's questionnaires threw it into the wastebasket. It is likely that happy women had better things to do than help Shere Hite churn out another long-winded tome, so we are left with the responses of the miserable and the embittered. And of course, not all 4,500 responses are reprinted in full. Everything was filtered through Hite's jaundiced eye.

Still, the book amply confirms the theories advanced by such disparate thinkers as George Gilder and Lenore Weitzman that it is men who made out like bandits in the sexual and feminist revolutions of the last two decades. The sexual revolution made an entire pool of women—the "nice girls" whom men were supposed to protect, respect, and, later, marry—suddenly available for no-strings-attached sex, without thought of protection, respect, or marriage. As for the feminist revolution, it relieved men of their obligation to support and honor the women who became the mothers of their children, or, indeed, the children themselves. This led to an astonishing coarsening of relations between the sexes, who have become competitors and, thus, enemies. What once was regulated by the rules of chivalry is now regulated in the courtroom, as in those latter-day phenomena, the sexual-harassment suit and "date rape."

The book's two saddest chapters are about dating—if it can still be called that—and they chronicle the miseries of life for single women without excuses to say no. "Last Saturday night I wound up with a man after an unusually pleasant intellectual conversation," writes one young woman, who adds that it is now Thursday and she has yet to hear from him. Another remarks with hurt surprise: "He had said he wasn't into one-night stands." But other chapters are equally depressing. It is horrifying to read account after account by long-divorced (and probably, for all intents and purposes, deserted) women in their fifties and sixties prattling of "relationships" and

"therapy" as though they were thirtish Manhattan singles.

Shere Hite, for one, still believes a revolution is in the offing that will eventually blunt sex differences—by which she appears to mean mostly the tendency of men to enjoy to the hilt whatever freedom is given them—and thus bring about the longed-for happiness of all. "In fact," she writes in her best utopian mode, "gender may be the basic, original split that needs to be healed to alter society, to lessen aggression as a way of life." But the women in her book know better. The "revolution" is already far along, and it has made relations between men and women not better but a lot worse, while doing nothing to blunt the sexual differences between them. No wonder most female book buyers have passed up this tome in favor of *How to Marry the Man of Your Choice*.

Khomeini's Revolution

HOLY TERROR: INSIDE THE WORLD OF ISLAMIC TERRORISM. By AMIR TAHERI. Adler & Adler. 332 pp. \$19.95.

Reviewed by DANIEL PIPES

Holy Terror represents a major effort by an Iranian Muslim to take stock of a decade of Islamic revolution. To be sure, Amir Taheri, an Iranian journalist now living in London, is no prose stylist or philosopher, nor is he a careful writer (the book is replete with inaccuracies). The author has also served himself badly with a trendy title and a sensationalist dust jacket which make it appear that the book explains the Iranian role in air-plane hijacking and hostage-taking—subjects of very limited importance. Nevertheless, Taheri offers an informed, courageous, and rare Muslim critique of the surge in radical fundamentalist Islam. His insight into the arcane world of Iranian leadership and his jour-

nalist's eye for the striking detail make his book an important source for ascertaining the impact of the Ayatollah Khomeini's regime, both in Iran and in the Muslim world as a whole.

In Taheri's peculiar nomenclature, "Holy Terror" refers to the system that came to power in Iran in 1979. He gives it this name because he sees terror as its main instrument of rule, one freely utilized against everyone—Iranian citizens, other Muslims, and non-Muslims alike. Taheri maintains that the Ayatollah Khomeini's notions of radical fundamentalist Islam are a terrible aberration, representing neither a cohesive ideological doctrine nor the popular opinion of Muslims nor the future of Islam.

Each of these three points is worth exploring. In answer to the historian Marvin Zonis, who has characterized Khomeini's thinking as "the single most impressive political ideology . . . since the Bolshevik Revolution," Taheri calls it "little more than a hodgepodge of medieval thought and methods directly borrowed from both fascism and Communism." Moreover, he argues, radical fundamentalists do not have a wide base of support among Muslims. From Turkey to Malaysia, democratic elections in Muslim countries consistently show that fundamentalists exercise very limited appeal. In Iran itself, as the mullahs all remember, it was a democratic government in 1911 that condemned the leading ayatollah of the day and had him publicly hanged.

In fact, Taheri contends, the fundamentalists represent little more than themselves. "What is at issue is not a duel between Islam and the West, but a war waged by a party of dedicated and ruthless fanatics against the rest of humanity, including the majority of Muslims." He rightly reiterates that Muslims comprise the majority of Khomeini's victims—and Khomeini despises these victims yet more thoroughly than he does his foreign enemies. As one Iranian leader put it, "Those who made Carter crawl at the feet of the Imam [Khomeini] and beg for pardon, those who made the chief of America wag his tail and rub his nose in dust, will

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not be afraid of little Satans and their assistants."

Finally, according to Taheri, the future does not belong to the fundamentalists. They have little to their credit in Iran or Lebanon, and a number of signs point to their slipping popularity. Thus, the movement against President Numayri of the Sudan in 1985 featured demonstrators chanting "Down with Islamic law." In Egypt, Nasserist organizations, after some years' absence, are back in strength at universities. A book titled *No to Islamic Law* has found wide popularity throughout the Middle East. Further, lowered oil revenues and the war with Iraq have drastically reduced the Islamic Republic's international activities. Taheri concludes that a "slowly mounting challenge" to the Khomeinists appears to have become irreversible.

TAHERI provides fascinating glimpses of life in the Islamic Republic. On the issue of women and what he calls a system of "apartheid based on sex," he describes the enormous efforts of the authorities to impose the veil—everything from subsidies for the compliant to acid thrown in the faces of the obstinate. The veil matters so much because the very basis of faith is jeopardized when men see women in public. According to Ali Akbar Hashemi-Rafsanjani, probably the second most powerful figure in Iran after Khomeini, "Every single lock of hair that shows from beneath a chador [veil] carelessly worn is like a dagger aimed at the heart of the martyrs. America cannot defeat Islam with all the tanks, bombers, and missiles Reagan commands. But Islam will be defeated if its womenfolk refuse to cover their hair and wear proper clothes." (For men, it is the absence of hair that the fundamentalists deem satanic; an Iranian slogan declares "Death to him who shaves!")

Thought control approaches the totalitarian. According to a Lebanese leader quoted by Taheri, "Islam has an answer to every imaginable question. All an individual needs to do is to obey the rules without posing questions, without seeking variations." Following this

logic to the very end, another prominent figure argues that "a man who thinks is sending signals to Satan."

Taheri estimates that one million Iranians out of a population of forty million have spent time in prison for "un-Islamic behavior." On the premise that "good Muslims are never alone," the authorities find activities to fill the Iranian citizen's time, activities enforced by unsmiling teen-age boys toting machine guns. As one weary resident of Teheran has complained, "Islamic days are short indeed."

Hostility toward the West is unbounded. As early as 1942, Khomeini characterized European ideology as "blood-sucking, man-eating, and the burning of countries." More imaginatively, one of his followers has described Southern California as "a collection of casinos, supermarkets, and whorehouses linked together by endless highways passing through nowhere." Christians are routinely referred to as Crusaders or "cross-worshippers." Radical fundamentalists are especially keen on reconquering Andalusia (which Muslims ruled for centuries), but their ambitions reach much farther than that: one Lebanese leader has predicted that "Islam will end up conquering Europe and America" and Iranian soldiers are told that they will spearhead "the Islamic conquest of the world."

Jews are subject not only to all the standard anti-Semitic obloquy and conspiracy-theorizing, but are accused of destroying Islam from within. Khomeinists see Atatürk, the Pahlavi dynasty, Gamal Abdel Nasser, Anwar al-Sadat, and even Yasir Arafat as Jews in disguise (because all of them clashed with fundamentalists). Israel, however, is a minor concern. The Khomeinists hate it, of course, but Taheri observes that they pay it only modest attention. Western support for Israel, he argues, is not a cause of Teheran's anti-Westernism; to the contrary, anti-Zionism derives in good part from the fact that Israel is seen as "an outpost of the West." He also points out that many more Palestinians have been killed by the pro-Iranian forces of Lebanon than by Israeli soldiers.



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The pro-Iranian elements in Lebanon make up part of Hizbullah ("Party of God"), an elusive international movement inspired and partially run from Teheran. As its founder has explained, "Hizbullah is an ethereal organization. It is everywhere and yet nowhere. It is everywhere because it is nowhere." This paradox rather neatly captures the party's informal, unstructured, yet very evident presence in Iran, Lebanon, and many other countries of the Middle East and Europe. It is as much a mood as an institution.

WHAT can be done to hasten the demise of Khomeinism? Amir Taheri offers suggestions for two diverse audiences, Western and Muslim. To the West, he advocates firm resistance to the extremists and steadfast adherence to principles. Reviewing the record, Taheri argues that Teheran avoided confrontation with the United States between early 1981 and early 1983 because it feared Ronald Reagan; the subsequent discovery that it could strike Americans with impunity invited a long campaign of terror, one that has led to at least 570 attacks on American interests, with 370 dead and 388 injured.

Equally important, the West must maintain high standards of conduct in fighting the radical fundamentalists, for Khomeini's power will only be broken by Muslims who recognize that there is a better alternative, and that means a Western alternative. Taheri holds that the Muslim masses have hardly ever been exposed to "true Westernization," by which he means the rule of law, political pluralism, freedom of expression, and minority rights, but where these have indeed been known they have been "enthusiastically accepted." All the more reason, then, for the West to stick to its principles.

As for his fellow Muslims, Taheri calls on them to stand up and be counted in the battle against fundamentalism. He is especially concerned that intellectuals assert Islam's positive role as "a maker of civilization." But this means active confrontation. Taheri sends out a very unusual public call to arms: the fundamentalists have "to be

faced and fought, and must eventually be defeated by forces of life in the Muslim world itself before Islamic societies can tackle the inescapable problem of modernization."

Those of us on the sidelines can only hope that this appeal is heard, for the stakes are great. Should it be ignored, hundreds of millions of Muslims will remain backward and angry, and the world will pay the price along with them.

The Aesthete

OSCAR WILDE. By RICHARD ELLMANN. *Knopf*. 632 pp. \$24.95.

Reviewed by
GEORGE SIM JOHNSTON

IN RECENT decades Oscar Wilde has enjoyed a run on the intellectual exchange like no other Victorian. "With each passing year the figure of Wilde becomes clearer and larger," Lionel Trilling wrote in 1972, not going quite so far as Harold Bloom, who recently included Wilde on his short list of writers who will be crucial to postmodern culture, the others being Emerson, Nietzsche, Pater, and Freud. Dismissed by the first generation of literary modernists as a relic of the Yellow 90's, Wilde has since been proclaimed the patron saint of Camp by Susan Sontag and identified as an early, brilliant avatar of the "therapeutic" by Philip Rieff. His rehabilitation has been all the more remarkable in that among his works only *The Importance of Being Earnest* still has currency. The play is Wilde's masterpiece, the most sublime stage farce ever written; but Trilling put it correctly: it is the figure of Wilde which commands our attention, and we are apt to depend on Wilde's biographers in a way that we do not in the case of the other writers on Harold Bloom's list.

The shelf of Wilde biographies is long and, on the whole, unsatisfactory. Some of the early ones confirm Wilde's own remark that

among a great man's disciples, it is Judas who writes the biography. For sheer pleasure, Hesketh Pearson's 1946 portrait remains unsurpassed. Pearson's idea was to reconstruct Wilde as delightful personality, "to take him out of the fog of pathology into the light of comedy . . . to revive the conversationalist, not the convict." This is perfectly reasonable. Wilde's most brilliant creation was himself, and a biographer may be excused for approaching his personality like a drama critic who is not obliged to dwell on the messy sketches and drafts behind the polished work at hand. With the possible exceptions of Doctor Johnson and Sydney Smith, Wilde was the most engaging company in the history of English letters, and the first task of a biographer is to depict those qualities which enabled him to dominate the best dinner tables in London.

Wilde was endowed not only with extraordinary wit, but also, as W. H. Auden remarked, with qualities which are singularly lacking in witty people; he was tolerant, gracious, and extraordinarily kind. He possessed in particular a childlike quality noted by Yeats, "the enjoyment of his own spontaneity," which makes a good Wilde anecdote tonic for the spirit. Even on his deathbed, he could lift the mood of those around him: "My wallpaper and I are fighting a duel to the death. One or the other of us has to go." The grace and exuberance of the man made his lecture tour of America in 1882 one of the most charming things ever to happen to this country:

I have also lectured at Leadville [Wilde wrote to a friend], the great mining city in the Rocky Mountains. . . . My audience was entirely miners. . . . I spoke to them of the early Florentines, and they slept as though no crime had ever stained the ravines of their mountain home . . . unluckily I described one of Jimmy Whistler's "nocturnes in blue and gold." Then they leaped to their feet and in their grand simple way swore that such things should not be. Some of the younger ones pulled their revolvers out and left hurriedly to see if Jimmy was "prowling

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about the saloons." . . . Their enthusiasm satisfied me and I ended my lecture there. . . . I had to open a new vein, or lode, which with a silver drill I brilliantly performed, amidst unanimous applause. The silver drill was presented to me and the lode named "The Oscar." I had hoped that in their simple grand way they would have offered me shares in "The Oscar," but in their artless untutored fashion they did not.

One of the few times Wilde ever deliberately stung anyone was when he told the Victorian actor Herbert Beerbohm Tree that his Hamlet was "funny without being vulgar." The actor's feelings were a small price to pay for the best putdown in literary history.

The extrovert side of Wilde is not the only concern of the biographer, however. We all come down to dinner, wrote the Victorian essayist Walter Bagehot, but each has a room to himself. In Wilde, the fissure between public performer and the man who took counsel with himself in solitude is a serious problem. Beneath the resplendent shell there was a sick and perverse man. Wilde had such charm that it is easy to lose sight of the blackness inside him. But we need only look at his contemptible treatment of his wife and children to get an idea of his perversity. Auden called Wilde's marriage his one unpardonable act, but that is surely being generous to one who acted on a provisional creed of seeking "perfection in sin" and who was bent on his own destruction no matter what the consequences to those around him.

The lessons we learn from Wilde's life are almost too pat: turn over a brilliant and destructive epigram and you find spiritual squalor; scratch the merry pagan and you find a corrosive melancholy. Literary history is full of examples: Gautier, Swinburne, Rossetti, Samuel Butler; they were all, like Falstaff, as melancholy as gibcats. Wilde was no exception. He styled himself a Hellenist, and there was in him that combination of sadness and restlessness which settled on the late classical world like a noxious ether.

THE late Richard Ellmann gives us

many wonderful things in his new biography of Wilde. The research is exhaustive and the writing, often condensing to epigram, is elegant. Most modern academic biographies are torture chambers for their subjects, but Ellmann approaches Wilde with exquisite literary tact. He is equal, moreover, to the formidable task of presenting Wilde's personality in all its glory in a way that Wilde's last major biographer, H. Montgomery Hyde, was not. Ellmann's account of Wilde's 1882 tour of America could make a small and perfect book in itself.

But nowhere in the six hundred pages of *Oscar Wilde* do we find a bridge spanning the enormous gulf that opens before us the more we consider Wilde's personal history—the gulf between the happy temperament on the one hand and the sick soul on the other. The book is "definitive" about everything except the elusive moral center of its subject. What led Wilde to seek out the lowest life in London and "feast with panthers"? Why did he get such pleasure out of corrupting others? The answers are barely implicit in Ellmann's account. He does not go much into Wilde's dark side, but rather reports its manifestations with an academic neutrality. As a result, Wilde's grotesque behavior comes across as a flaw in the persona rather than as the result of an evil whose only cure may well have been radical rather than palliative.

Ellmann maintained a similar polite distance from the pathological center of his earlier subject, James Joyce, which is manifest in everything Joyce wrote after *Dubliners* (Evelyn Waugh remarked that you can see Joyce going mad sentence by sentence). It was left to Leon Edel to show persuasively in a series of essays that Joyce was a kind of monster who believed that the practice of his art justified any degree of parasitism and selfishness. Reading both Ellmann biographies, one cannot help concluding that Ellmann subscribed to the notion of the moral autonomy of the artist which has flourished since Flaubert and which has had its share of responsibility for so many messy lives.

Ellmann does not explicitly stake out his position until the last words of the book; he judges Wilde finally as ". . . so generous, so amusing, and so right." The last adjective is presumably an endorsement of Wilde's thinking, which Ellmann limns with great authority. But what are we to make of Wilde's doctrine of art for art's sake, of his championing of the aesthetic over the ethical?

MAYBE CBS should bring back Jimmy the Greek to fill in until Dan Rather recovers his composure.

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Under the influence of Walter Pater and the French decadents, Wilde set up as his ideal the aesthetic man who drifts from mood to mood, whose goal is to recreate himself ("The first duty in life is to assume a pose") and to experiment with new sensations. The aesthete is beholden to no moral law, and if a *frisson* can be had from the practice of some evil, then evil is to be indulged. (In the English *fin de siècle* this usually meant passing a few hours with a dance-hall girl or with boy "renters"; the English were amateurs in this department compared with their counterparts across the Channel.) Wilde seems to have first experimented with homosexuality at age thirty-two out of aesthetic caprice; we can almost say that it was an intellectual pose, and not biology, which started the chain of events that ultimately landed him in Reading jail.

In its most refined form, and after many permutations, the doctrine of art for art's sake produced Yeats's best poem, "Sailing to Byzantium"; but its general influence has not been salutary. In various guises, it still permeates our culture. Norman Mailer's famous essay "The White Negro," which celebrates criminal violence as a means of procuring extraordinary sensations, is a piece of portentous Wildeanism. Andy Warhol, whose phrases and gestures have been internalized by a generation of young artists, was a minimalist rendition of Wilde. Rock stars, sexual propagandists, and the cultural leftists who write for the *Village Voice* are also late disciples.

If the center of Wilde's philoso-

phy should be approached with caution, however, there are innumerable passing remarks at the periphery which can still be quoted with profit. Wilde's most fervent protest was against the incessant "doing" of Northern Protestant civilization, and his epigrams stand as a mild corrective. His observations about literature, moreover, are extraordinarily suggestive; he could compress whole monographs into a sentence or two. "Wordsworth went to the lakes, but he was never a lake poet. He found in stones the sermons he had already put there." "Meredith is a prose Browning, and so is Browning."

But Wilde and the other cultural rebels who flourished in England between 1870 and 1914—Walter Pater, Samuel Butler, George Bernard Shaw, and E.M. Forster—finally have little to say to us because the targets of their rebellion, the norms of Victorian society, were so limited. Instead of rebelling against God, they were fighting the Reverend Theobald Pontifex. (The English, as Walker Percy has noted, have been behaving decently for the last four hundred years in order to prove that they can get by without God.) They imagined they were assaulting two thousand years of Judeo-Christian culture when in reality they were teasing Mrs. Grundy. The Victorian who practiced philanthropy rather than charity, who was priggish rather than prudent, and whose moderation was really a fear of exuberance, was a just target of epigrams; but the mistake of the rebels was to let him, rather than some wider objective standard, set the terms of the debate.

The same was true in art as in morals. The high Victorian was unaesthetic to the core of his being and deserved to have his nose tweaked by a handful of intellectuals who had read Baudelaire. One of the more satisfying moments of Ellmann's biography occurs during the trial of Wilde's disastrous libel suit against the Marquess of Queensberry (who had denounced Wilde as a "somdomite" [*sic*] for his dalliance with Queensberry's son, Alfred Douglas). The ferociously philistine Sir Edward Carson cross-examines the plaintiff:

Carson read a passage from *Dorian Gray* and demanded, "Did you write that?" Wilde said he had the honor to be the author. Carson laid down the book with a sneer and turned over some papers. Wilde was lost in thought. Presently Carson read aloud a piece of verse from one of Wilde's articles. "And I suppose you wrote that also, Mr. Wilde?" Wilde waited till you could hear a pin drop and then said, very quietly, "Ah, no, Sir Edward, Shakespeare wrote that." Carson went scarlet. . . .

It was understandable why Wilde and the other writers of the 90's wanted to set up the aesthetic against the ethical when the ethical meant Sir Edward Carson. But the result was an art devoid of moral substance, and the literature of the Yellow Book period is little read today. Ellmann clearly sides with Wilde against the grim custodians of Victorian virtue, but neither side should be allowed to have the last say.

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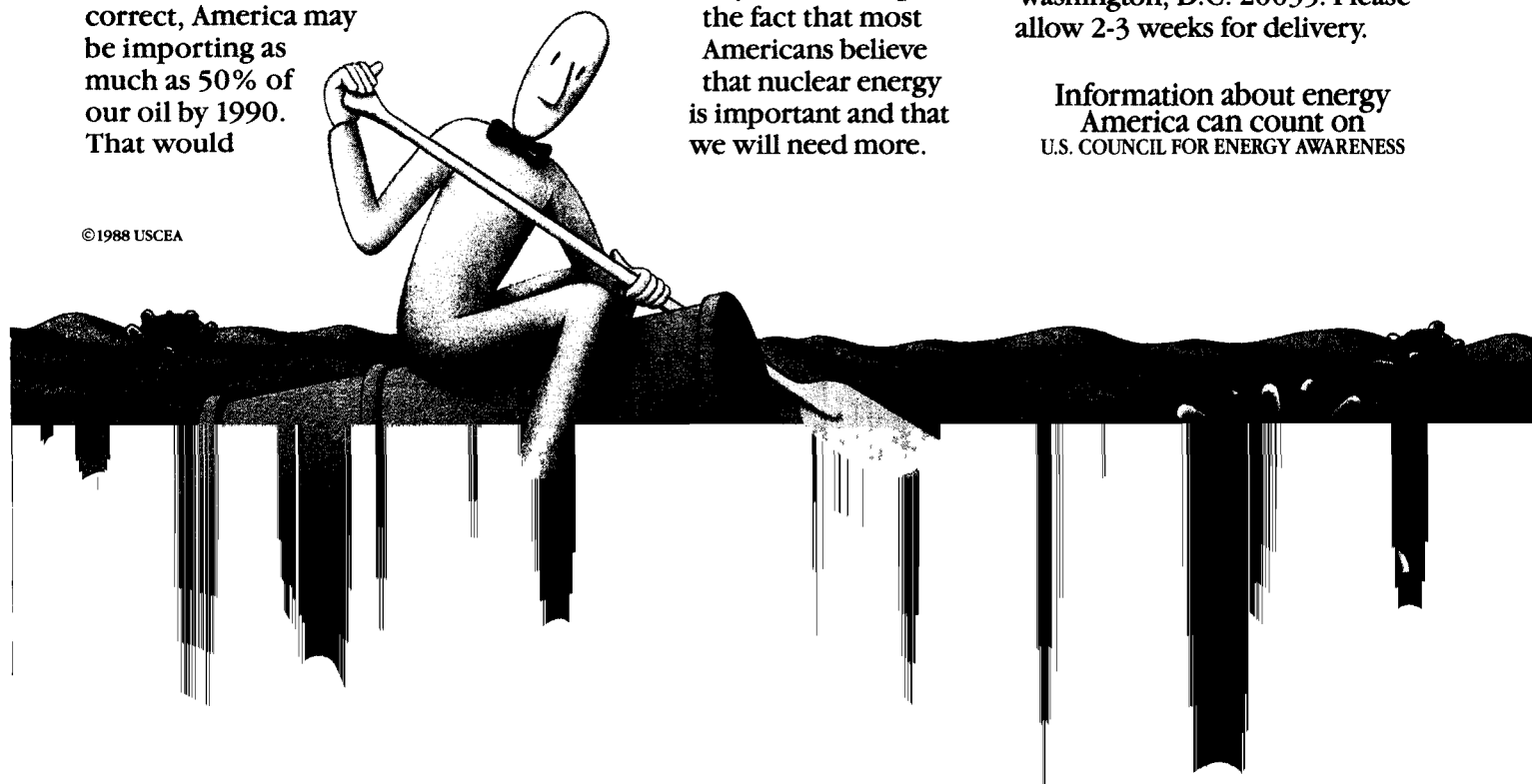
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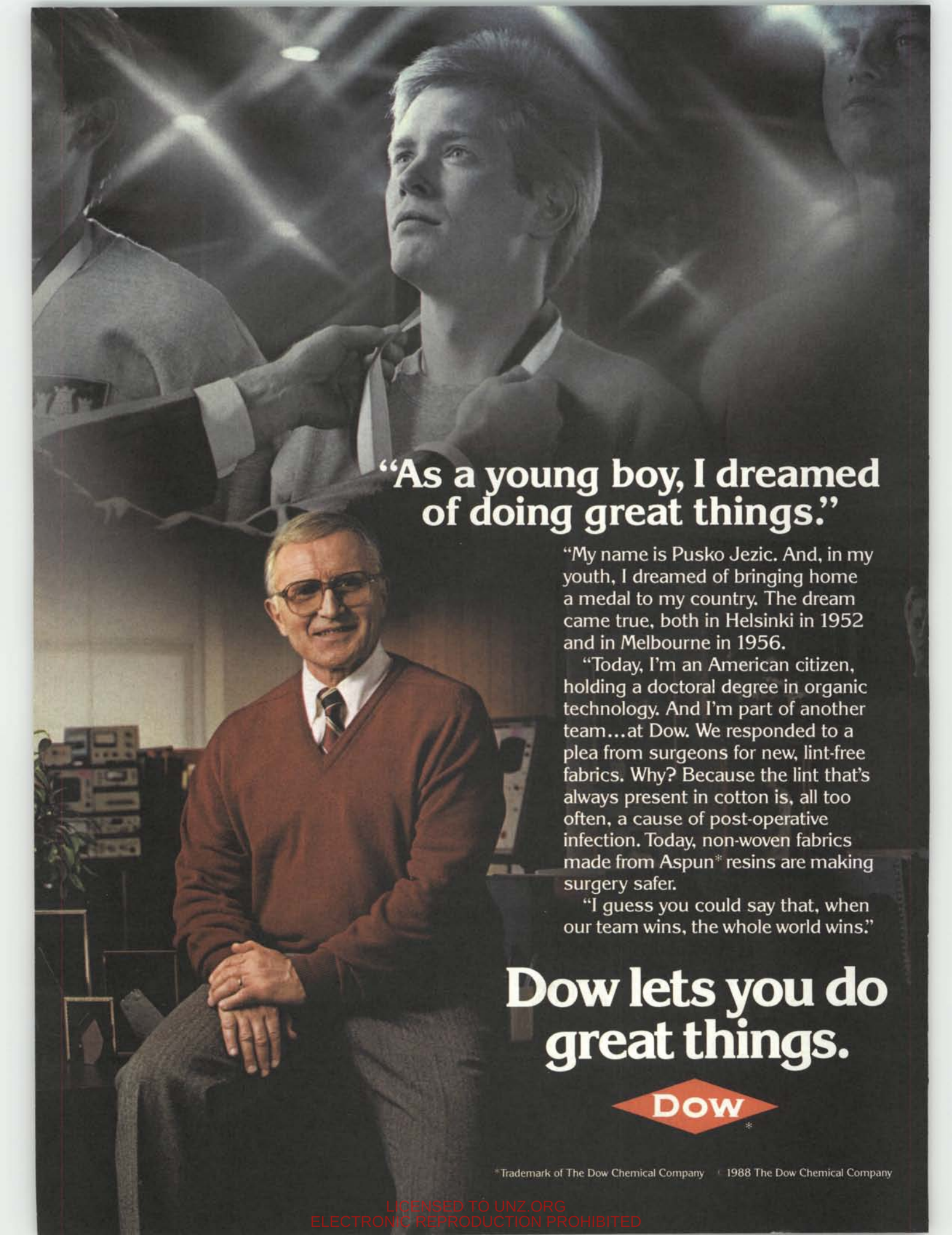
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